

Opposition delegation on Syrian visit

AMMAN (AFP) — A 27-member delegation of Jordanian opposition parties left for Syria on Monday for "consultations" with Syrian political parties. In a statement, the delegation said the three-day visit to Syria was to focus on "exploring ways to stand up to the United States' aggressive policies in the region." It added that the United States was "seeking the surrender of the Arab people and to impose a pro-U.S. and pro-Zionist settlement to the (Arab-Israeli conflict)." The Jordanian delegation was also to discuss "means of bolstering ties between Jordanian and Syrian political forces within the framework of the pan-Arab resistance movement against the Zionist enemy." The statement said the delegation would also seek to "boost inter-Arab solidarity and call for restoring relations between Syria and Iraq." The delegation comprises representatives of the Jordanian Baathist Party, both pro-Iraqi and pro-Syrian, in addition to representatives from the Islamic Action Front.

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Kabariti receives Japanese message

AMMAN (J.T.) — Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti received on Monday a message from Japanese Foreign Minister Akihito Ikeda on bilateral relations and the ways to develop them, particularly in the economic field, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said. It said Mr. Ikeda expressed in his message, which was relayed to the prime minister by Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura, appreciation for the Jordanian role in efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East and stressed the need to enhance Japanese-Jordanian coordination. Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) Governor Ziyad Fariz will head a Jordanian delegation to Japan on Nov. 8 to follow up on economic cooperation. Tokyo and Amman are currently discussing grant aid for projects in Jordan and loans to help the Kingdom's development efforts.

Ross heads for home; Hebron talks continue

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. MIDEAST envoy Dennis Ross suspended on Monday a three-week effort to forge agreement between Israelis and Palestinians on Israel's long-delayed troop withdrawal from the West Bank city of Hebron. Israelis and Palestinians accused each other of preventing agreement on the Hebron redeployment, but both stressed that the talks would continue even in Mr. Ross' absence. Negotiators were due to meet late Monday, but it was unclear where or at what level. After a round of all-night talks failed to overcome Israel's reluctance to hand Hebron over to Yasser Arafat's self-rule government, Mr. Ross announced early Monday that he was returning to Washington "for consultations" with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher.

Mr. Ross said he decided to go home because Mr. Arafat left Monday on a four-day European tour and an agreement on Hebron was unlikely to be finalized in his absence. "Clearly the pace of the negotiations is affected when the leaders are not here," he said. "Over the past three weeks we have made substantial progress," Mr. Ross said in a statement. But his bottom line was: "Differences remain." The impasse raised fears of fresh violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, a month after unprecedented gunbattles claimed the lives of 60 Palestinians and 15 Israeli soldiers.

A 10-year-old Palestinian boy died in hospital on Monday after being beaten in the West Bank by a Jewish settler who suspected he had thrown stones at Israeli cars, the boy's father said. In Hebron, where 400 Jews live in heavily guarded compounds amid 120,000 Palestinians, Jewish settlers opened fire near Palestinians on Sunday after their vehicle was pelted with stones. Israelis and Palestinians have logged scores of negotiating hours this month trying to come to terms on the Hebron withdrawal, which Israel committed to more than a year ago. U.S. President Bill Clinton urged both Mr. Arafat and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in

Settler kills Palestinian boy in Husan

HUSAN, West Bank (AFP) — A Jewish settler beat a 10-year-old Palestinian boy to death as he walked home from school, relatives said Monday, saying they now feared for the life of his ill baby sister who was awaiting a bone marrow transplant from the murdered child. Israeli hospital officials confirmed that Hilmi Shusha died Sunday from severe head injuries at a Jerusalem hospital. Cousins who were with Hilmi told AFP he was kicked in the head and

Crown Prince in Prague

Special from Prague

HIS ROYAL Highness Crown Prince Hassan, accompanied by His Royal Highnesses Princess Sarvath, Princess Rahma and Prince Rashid, arrived here today for a three-day visit that is expected to expand political and economic cooperation between Jordan and the Czech Republic. The Crown Prince will meet today with President Vaclav Havel, Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus and Minister of Trade and Industry Vladimir Dlouhy in an effort aimed not only at expanding cooperation, as a senior Jordanian official put it, but also to create new ties in light of the recent historic changes in the Middle East and Central Europe.

"Central Europe is an emerging new force on the world political and economic scene," the official, who is accompanying the Crown Prince, said. "And Jordan is launching a fresh effort to renew old ties (that had existed under communist regimes) according to a new bases and dimensions." "It was no coincidence that Jordan chose to start the effort with a country whose president is a world renowned intellectual who shares the same interest with us and who is friends with the Crown Prince," the official explained. "Through focusing on the cooperative dimension, Jordan and the Czech Republic can reproduce a relationship based on mutual interests and goals."

Jordanian officials believe that Amman and Prague can put to good use their common experiences in the political and socio-economic fields, especially since both have witnessed transformations towards democratisation, civil society and free markets. Then there are the overlapping global security and cooperation concerns. The Czechs, on the one hand, are expecting to become fully integrated in the European Union (EU) by 1999 and join the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) when the time is right. Jordan, on the other hand, has concluded its treaty of peace with Israel, is working towards regional security and cooperation in concert with both the EU and NATO.

"The Czech Republic, as a stable democratic country, is widely regarded as a good example of political, economic and social transformation," a senior aide to the Crown Prince said. "Since Jordan believes that the Euro-Atlantic and the Euro-Mediterranean frameworks provide two overlapping and complementary circles of cooperation, we propose to initiate a process of long-term coordination with Prague at the bilateral and multilateral levels."

During his talks here with Czech leaders today and tomorrow, the Crown Prince is expected to discuss a proposal for setting up a free trade agreement between the two countries, which will be modelled along the lines of the EU agreement with Jordan. "This will enable both states to take full advantage of cumulative rules of ori-

King, Mubarak meet today at Sharm Al Sheikh

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak will meet today at the Red Sea resort of Sharm Al Sheikh to discuss the Middle East peace process, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported. The agency said the two leaders agreed to meet during a telephone conversation on Monday. The meeting comes amid continuing efforts to work out an Israeli-Palestinian agreement over an Israeli military deployment in the West Bank town of Hebron. U.S. mediator Dennis Ross headed for

home on Monday after a 19-day effort to work out an agreement. However, the negotiations continued on Monday despite the mediator's absence.

King Hussein on Sunday urged Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat to reach an accord soon.

King Hussein in each of two telephone conversations with the two leaders emphasised the necessity of them reaching a decisive agreement over the long delayed redeployment of Israeli troops from Hebron.

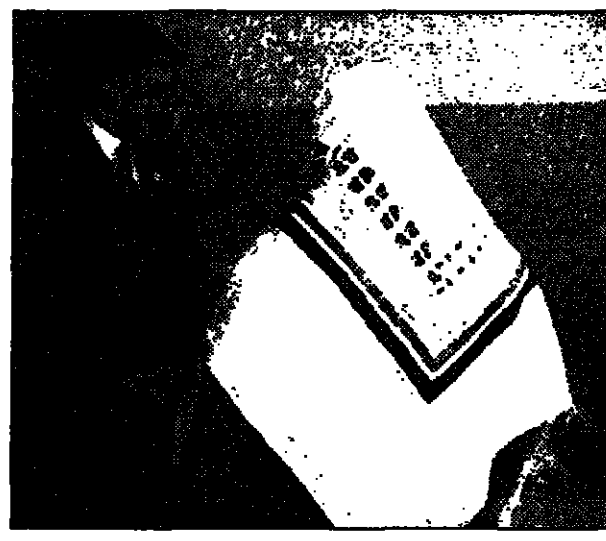
Kidnapped newborn reunited with family after 35 days

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A baby kidnapped hours after her birth was happily reunited with her family early Monday after spending 35 days with a mother of six who confessed to police she had abducted the newborn to avert a possible divorce because of her inability to bear more children.

The biological parents of the girl had all but given up hope of regaining their daughter, who went missing from her hospital cradle shortly after birth on Sept. 22.

But the case was bust after Jordan Television broadcast an appeal to the public to report any suspicious presence of newborn babies in their neighbourhood. The appeal came as part of a programme of "People's Talk" hosted by Iman Naji on Saturday. The appeal prompted at least six calls, all of them false alarms, according to police sources (one of the callers spoke of a man who



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Monday visits the rescued baby and her family at King Hussein Medical Centre (Petra photo)

had a baby with him when he moved into a neighbourhood with his newlywed early this month, but it turned out that the man was divorced and the infant was from his previous marriage). According to police sources, the seventh call came from a woman at midnight Sunday and she gave the precise location of the missing girl. The caller refused to identify herself although police had announced a reward for information leading to the recovery of the kidnapped baby, the sources said (independent sources asserted that police were

(Continued on page 7)

EU names Spaniard as envoy to Mideast

LUXEMBOURG (Agencies) — The European Union on Monday named Spaniard Miguel Angel Moratinos to be its special envoy to the Middle East, EU diplomats said. Mr. Moratinos is Spain's ambassador to Israel. EU leaders agreed to appoint an envoy at their special summit in Dublin on October 5. The 15-nation bloc, urged on by France, has been seeking to play a greater role in the Middle East peace process, where it is already the chief financial backer. Mr. Moratinos' appointment represents a victory for those EU countries that had opposed France's suggestion that the envoy should be a senior political figure. Britain and Germany argued that this would be seen as an attempt to take over the United States' role as the main peace broker in the region.

Mr. Moratinos has been in Tel Aviv for three months. He was previously director of Middle East affairs in the Spanish foreign ministry. French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette said the appointment by the EU of a special envoy to the Middle East would place Europe on an equal footing with the United States and Russia in the region.

"It's a very important decision that will underscore Europe's wish to be more involved in the search for peace in the Middle East," Mr. De Charette told reporters as he arrived for the foreign ministers' meeting. "The United States has played a very great role, but Europe should too. The EU can legitimately claim along with the United States and Russia the position of co-sponsor" in the Middle East peace process, he said.

The EU foreign ministers' meeting comes the week after French President Jacques Chirac conducted a high-profile Middle East tour, and coincides with a similar

Mordechai says Israel could accept compromise on Golan

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai said Monday that Israel's right-wing government had not ruled out making territorial concessions to Syria on the Golan Heights, parliamentary sources said. "No official in our government has ever said we would not give up an inch of the Golan," Mr. Mordechai told the Knesset committee on defence and foreign affairs in the clearest indication to date by a government minister of flexibility on the Golan issue. Mr. Mordechai went on to appeal to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad to resume peace negotiations with Israel that have been frozen since February. "Not one senior official in the Israeli government has said: 'Not one inch on the Golan,'" an official briefing reporters quoted Mr. Mordechai as telling a parliamentary committee. The defence minister did not elaborate. Former Likud Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, ousted by the centrist Labour Party in

1992 elections, used the term "not one inch" during his tenure to underscore his government's stand that there would be no Golan concessions. Labour, in power until this June, was prepared to make at least a partial Golan withdrawal.

But Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who defeated Labour in elections last May, has vowed never to give up the strategic plateau Israel captured in the 1967 war. Outside the committee, Mr. Mordechai said Israel hoped peace talks with Damascus would be renewed soon but said that Israel was closely monitoring military developments in Syria.

Syrian troop movements in Lebanon last month and a series of military exercises have given Israel war jitters. Damascus has said the redeployment was defensive. More than five years of peace talks between Israel and Syria have stalled over the Heights. Damascus demands a full Israeli withdrawal.

With concern again building in Israel over suspicious military manoeuvres in Syria, the Israeli army has told Mr. Netanyahu it needs \$1 billion to prepare for war, the Haaretz newspaper reported Monday.

The general chief-of-staff submitted an outline multi-year budget proposal to Mr. Netanyahu last week saying that 3.5 billion shekels (\$1.1 billion) would be needed to prepare the army to fight a full-scale war with Syria, the newspaper said.

"The prime minister was told that the increase was necessary in light of the assessment of the country's intelligence agencies that the probability of war with Syria is no longer low and in light of the dangerous situation in the (Palestinian) territories," Haaretz reported.

Several hours after the meeting, Mr. Netanyahu last week said publicly that there would be no need to increase the military's budget in coming years, despite complaints from senior generals over planned budget cutbacks.

Anti-Taleban alliance fails to dent Kabul frontlines; air raids continue

KABUL (Agencies) — Anti-Taleban forces paused on Monday after failing to dent the front lines of the militia or to damage its main air base. Taleban fighters near the front lines some 25-30 kilometres north of the Afghan capital said that by late afternoon barely a shot had been fired all day. The pause followed the failure of the northern alliance trying to drive the Taleban out of Kabul to dislodge the militia defending a line of hills straggling across the plain north of the city.

Bombing raids by the small airforce of Uzbek chief Abdul Rashid Dostum for the second night running also failed to damage Kabul airport, used for both military and civilian traffic. Airport sources said Dostum warplanes dropped three bombs inside the airport perimeter on Sunday night, but struck well away from the runway and warplanes sitting in taxi areas and caused no damage. On Monday morning, two MiG-21s and a Sukhoi

fighter-bomber were being readied to return to the battlefield and there were no signs they would be impeded.

General Dostum, allied with former government military chief Ahmad Shah Masood, was apparently trying to stop the Taleban using Kabul airport to strengthen their frontlines. A Dostum bomber hit a city centre park on Saturday night, but injured no one.

The Taleban, who drove Mr. Masood from the capital a month ago, and Dostum forces sent warplanes into action on Sunday in the battle north of Kabul. A Masood spokesman said late on Sunday the latest alliance bid to break through the Taleban lines had failed. "We captured the high points which were planned," said Abdullah of the renewed attack on the De Sabz Pass 30 kilometres north of Kabul. "But the whole pass has not been secured."

Afghan watchers in Kabul say the alliance forces must punch through the hills to be able to push the Taleban back across the plain to the fringes of the Kabul Valley and to break out of vulnerable positions on their side of the plain. Since they were pushed out of Kabul by the Taleban last month, Mr. Masood's men have reversed some of their military misfortunes, and recaptured Bagram, located 50 kilometres north of Kabul.

Apart from the aerial bombardment there was little activity on the new road to Bagram Monday, although Taleban gunners fired intermittent rounds from their howitzers towards the airbase.

In addition to the new road, there is one other north-bound national highway, the so-called Old Road, which exits Kabul from the northwestern Khair Khana suburbs. Journalists were stopped at the Khair Khana Pass checkpoint by the Taleban and not allowed to travel out of Kabul to the Old

(Continued on page 7)

Kurdish peace talks set for tomorrow

ANKARA (Agencies) — The two rival Iraqi Kurd factions will open peace talks under U.S. auspices here on Wednesday, an Iraqi Kurdish official said on Monday. The talks between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) will be attended by U.S. envoy Robert Pelletreau and Turkish and British representatives, said PUK representative Shazad Saib. Mr. Saib said his faction's delegation was already in Ankara.

There was no immediate confirmation from the KDP. A KDP official told AFP Sunday that the Iraqi-backed group was seeking to delay the start of the negotiations until after the U.S. presidential election on Nov. 5.

The peace talks were announced here last week after KDP leader Masoud Barzani and PUK chief Jalal Talabani agreed in separate meetings with Mr. Pelletreau to observe a ceasefire in northern Iraq.

The two Kurdish leaders agreed to a truce, which has been in force since Thursday in northern Iraq, and to send teams to Ankara for direct KDP-PUK talks.

A Turkish spokesman said last week the talks were aimed at concluding a "permanent agreement" to "reestablish stability in northern Iraq with the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political integrity of Iraq intact."

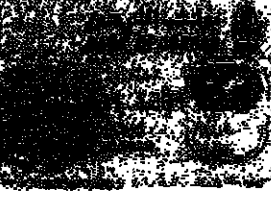
Mr. Pelletreau, the U.S. assistant secretary of state for near eastern affairs, left Muscat on Monday for Ankara.

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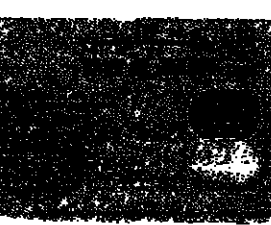
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Baghdad papers: Chirac did not say enough

BAGHDAD (AP) — French President Jacques Chirac won praise from many Arabs for his Middle East tour and his statements opposing U.S. and Israeli policy, but it was not enough to please Iraqis, according to newspapers published Sunday.

"Chirac's statement concerning Iraq was less than what is needed," said an editorial in Babel, the daily newspaper published by Uday Hussein, son of the Iraqi president.

"He spoke like the others when he said that Iraq must comply with U.N. resolutions in order to lift sanctions off its back," said the editorial. "We hope that he pinpoints the resolutions which Iraq has not complied with in order to clear up the subject for France and the world."

Chief U.N. weapons inspector Rolf Ekeus has said he does not have proof that Iraq has eliminated all of its weapons of mass destruction, as required by U.N. Security Council resolutions.

During his visit to the Middle East last week, Mr. Chirac called for lifting of sanctions when Iraq had complied with all resolutions, putting him in opposition to the United States and Britain, which call for additional measures, such as improvement in human rights.

Babel also accused Mr. Chirac of "forgetting that Iraq is also suffering from the no-fly zones, which France is taking part in."

The U.S.-led coalition that fought the Gulf war to drive Iraq out of Kuwait imposed a no-fly zone over much of southern Iraq to prevent Iraqi military actions toward its neighbours.

Both Babel and the state-run newspaper Al Jumhuriyah said Mr. Chirac had been humiliated during his visit to Israel, a reference to an incident in which the French president yelled at Israeli security guards who were following him closely in Jerusalem and preventing contacts between him and Palestinians.

Al Jumhuriyah's editorial writer, Salah Al Mukhtar, also criticised the French president, saying, "Chirac does not want to confront the United States because they are partners, but this partnership must not lead to harm for France's status in the world, or distance it from the international arena."

Mr. Mukhtar wrote positively about Mr. Chirac's statement that "Iraq is a great country" and his call for immediate implementation of a deal allowing Iraq to sell oil to buy food, while awaiting full lifting of the sanctions.



TALEBAN WARRIOR: An Afghan Taliban fighter holds a walkie talkie as he sits behind a mound, 20 kilometres north of Kabul. Anti-Taliban forces paused on Monday after failing to dent the front lines of the Islamic militia or to damage its main air base. Taliban fighters said by late afternoon barely a shot had been fired all day (Reuters photo)

Post-election U.S.-Israel ties could be turbulent

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel is likely to come under increased pressure from the United States to make progress in the peace process if President Bill Clinton is reelected next month, according to Israeli political analysts.

While they differ on how much pressure Washington would exert on the Jewish state, the analysts agree on one point: the United States will not sit back and watch the Middle East peace process die.

On the other hand, the United States will not dictate to Israel in light of their traditionally good relations and the influence of the American Jewish community, especially on the Democratic Party, they said.

The composition of the U.S. Congress following the Nov. 5 election will also be a factor: a Democratic majority in the House of Representatives would not back the right-wing Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in defiance of a Clinton

administration.

Mr. Clinton "has no sympathy for a man who, when he was in the opposition, was openly sympathetic to the Republican Party," Haaretz newspaper's diplomatic correspondent Akiba Eldar said in a reference to Mr. Netanyahu.

The U.S. president supported Shimon Peres, Mr. Netanyahu's Labour party rival, in last May's general elections here.

But Mr. Clinton "has taken Mr. Netanyahu's pledges to continue the peace process seriously," said Mr. Eldar, the former Washington correspondent for Haaretz.

"He has been very disappointed by their three meetings and, if he has not said so openly, it's only because the elections will be held soon," he said.

A reelected Mr. Clinton would have plenty of elbow room with regard to U.S. public opinion, since he will not have to worry about running for a third term and will have less need to heed pressure from

the pro-Israel lobby.

Researcher Mark Heller said Mr. Clinton will not need to blame Mr. Netanyahu. "It will be enough for him to avoid taking his side, since he has already been fiercely attacked internationally," he said.

Mr. Heller, a specialist in the Arab-Israeli conflict at Tel Aviv University's Centre for Strategic Studies, ruled out overt pressure on Israel "as long as the peace process keeps going, for better or worse."

"The Palestinians and Syrians are deluding themselves if they believe that the United States will side with them after the elections and adopt a position comparable to France's," he said.

French President Jacques Chirac, who toured the region last week, championed Arab rights and called for a Palestinian state.

For Eytan Gilboa, a specialist in Israeli-U.S. relations, a more active U.S. Middle East policy would not necessarily favour the

Arabs.

"Even if the Americans don't accept the position of the Israeli government, which plans to keep the Golan Heights, they don't support the position of Damascus either, which is demanding an Israeli commitment to withdraw from the entire Golan," he said.

The United States believes Syria was too "intransigent when an agreement was possible with the Labour government, before the right rose to power in Israel," he said.

However, Washington considers the peace process the key to its Middle East policy and "will do what's necessary to avoid a major upheaval," Mr. Gilboa said.

Another academic, Dore Gold, said in 1992 that Israeli-U.S. relations would suffer from a prolonged stalling of the peace process and a relaunching of Jewish settlement.

Mr. Gold is now an advisor to Mr. Netanyahu, who has impeded the process and restarted settlement on the West Bank.

Journalist released on bail

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A journalist who was detained for alleged involvement in the unrest in the south in August has been released on bail after 70 days in custody and faces charges in a court of law, officials and local reports said Monday.

Fuad Hussein, a reporter for the Al Aswaq Arabic-language daily, was freed on a JD 20,000 bail on Sunday.

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher told a weekly news briefing that Mr. Hussein faced trial in a court of law, but the minister did not specify what the charges were.

According to reports in the local press, Mr. Hussein said to be a prominent activist of the pro-Iraq Arab Baath Socialist Party, was also not informed of the charges against him.

Lawyer Ahmad Najdawi said another Baathist activist, Mohammad Akram Hamsi, was also released along with Mr. Hussein and only one member of the Baathist party, identified as Ahmad Sharaya, remained in detention. Mr. Hussein could not be reached for comment on Monday, but he was quoted in the local press as saying that he was not interrogated during detention.

The journalist, a member of the executive council of the Jordan Press Association (JPA), was also quoted as criticising the JPA for not doing enough to secure his release. But JPA sources pointed out that the council had made several representations on behalf of Mr. Hussein as well as some others who were held in connection with the riots in the south.

In a early October appeal to the government, the JPA urged that the authorities either produce Mr. Hussein in a court of law to be formally charged or be released.

All journalists were detained shortly after the mid-August riots in the south but all of them have been released after short periods of detention. They face trials on charges ranging from violations of the Press and Publications Law to lese majeste in connection with their coverage of the unrest. Some of the reports carried in the local tabloids were deemed as aimed at inciting sedition and undermining national security while others were found to be baseless and fabricated, officials say.

In his press briefing on Monday, Dr. Muasher emphasised that the Ministry of Information had not filed charges against any journalist involving lese majeste or national security.

Such charges do not come under the realm of the Ministry of Information or the executive authority, he said.

"The Department of Press and Publications have raised cases against only those who are found to have violated the Press and Publications Law," said the minister. "All other cases where journalists are involved are handled by the general prosecutor and the judiciary in general with no government role whatsoever," he said.

NEWS IN BRIEF

U.S. embassy issues alert in Kuwait

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. embassy in Kuwait said on Sunday it has received threats against American interests in Kuwait. The embassy urged U.S. citizens to avoid predictable movements, vary routes and schedules, be alert to unusual or "overly inquisitive" persons, inspect their cars, park in secure areas and avoid actions that might draw attention. Last month the United States completed its deployment to Kuwait of around 3,000 troop reinforcements to deter Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. The troops from the U.S. army's First Cavalry Division joined 1,200 troops who have been training in the desert since August as well as several hundred support staff at Camp Doha.

Iran appoints new ambassador to UAE

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iran has named Hossein Sadeghi as its new ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Iran's official news agency IRNA reported Monday. Mrs. Adeghi has previously served as ambassador to Kuwait and head of the Foreign Ministry's Gulf affairs section. Iran and the UAE are locked in a sovereignty dispute over three strategic Gulf islands — Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb.

Bomb blasts office of secular Turkish movement

ISTANBUL (AFP) — A bomb attack carried out Sunday by four militants seriously damaged the office of a movement defending Turkey's secular republican tradition, at Gebze in the western province of Kocaeli, local officials said. Four masked militants locked up the secretary of the Ataturk heritage association and planted three bombs. They daubed pro-Islamic slogans on the walls like "Sharia (Islamic law) or death" before making their escape. Only one of the bombs went off. The two others were defused by police experts. The secretary was unhurt but the premises were badly damaged in the blast. The attack was claimed by the Islamic Front of Grand Orient combatants (IFBDA-C) a group previously known for its attacks on churches and cafes in Istanbul.

Sudan denies report of new coup bid

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A Sudanese military spokesman denied Sunday reports that Sudan had foiled a military coup this week and had arrested several officers. General Senoussi Ahmad said in a communique broadcast by the SUNA news agency that the report which originated in Egypt, was "an ill-intentioned rumour put about by people hoping to create instability in Sudan." The Egyptian news agency MENA earlier said at least 10 officers had been detained. They were accused of plotting to overthrow the government and were being questioned by the army's general command in Khartoum, MENA reported. On August 24, the country's army announced that it had dismantled a previous "attempted subversion" but denied reports by the Sudanese opposition that 11 officers implicated in that plot had been executed. An army spokesman then said 25 people, including 17 soldiers had been arrested and accused of involvement in the "subversive attempt" at port Sudan. A military tribunal began a hearing in September of another group of soldiers and civilians accused of planning a coup in March. Gen. Senoussi said security was in force in Sudan and that "the armed forces are in control of all the points of entry and of the country's borders."

Saudi Arabia and Qatar sign border demarcation contract

RIYADH (AP) — Saudi Arabia and Qatar have signed a contract with a French company to demarcate their disputed border, signalling a move to end nearly four years of strained relations.

Marine borderlines are also to be included in the boundary to be drawn by I.G.N. France Internationale, the Saudi press agency reported Sunday.

Mapping was expected to begin in November and take at least six months to complete.

In April, both countries invited foreign companies to bid on a contract to draw

a binding border line, and the contract was signed Saturday in the Saudi capital, Riyadh, the press agency said.

Neither the number of bidders nor the date of the contract award was disclosed.

The border squabble climaxed in a 1992 shootout between the two countries that left two people dead and unsettled relations among Gulf Arab states.

The contract was signed by Qatari Minister of Justice Najib Al Naeemy and the director of the Saudi military landscape department, Muree Al Shahrany.

Bahrain court clears way for executions

MANAMA (R) — A cassation court in Bahrain has ruled it had no jurisdiction over another court's death sentences against three Bahrainis for a deadly arson attack, paving the way for their execution, a lawyer said on Monday.

"The cassation court said it has no jurisdiction over the state security court's decision. This means the executions will take place any day now," said the defence lawyer, who refused to be named.

Bahrain's state security court in July ordered the execution of the three Bahrainis for the arson

attack in March in which seven Bangladeshi restaurant workers died.

The court also jailed four Bahrainis for life for taking part in the attack. Another defendant was jailed for 15 years.

Bahrain in March executed a man for killing a policeman, in the first such move against an anti-government protester since political unrest erupted December 1994.

The lawyer criticised the cassation court's Sunday decision, saying "it was not a legal judgment, but a political one. This is against article 40 of the law of cas-

sation. Any death sentence must be referred to the cassation court."

"The (cassation) court only met for two minutes. This closed the door on any kind of further discussion of the case," he said.

A government official had no immediate comment on the case.

The three who were sentenced to death were named as Ali Ahmad Abdullah Al Asfoor, Youssef Hassan Abdul Baqi And Ahmad Khalil Ibrahim Hubail Al Katan.

The state security court has sentenced more than 150 people since Bahrain's

government, seeking to accelerate judgments, ordered it in March to try hundreds of detainees held for street protests, sabotage and arson attacks.

Members of Bahrain's majority Shiite community have been waging a violent campaign to demand political and economic reforms. About 27 people, including three policemen and the seven Bangladeshis, have been killed in waves of violence.

Diplomats say the government has over the past few months contained the unrest in the Gulf's financial and banking centre.

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PROGRAMME TWO

14:05 Budgie
14:25 Adventure on the Rainbow Pood
14:45 I Love Lucy
15:00 Sciences Cartoon
15:15 Magazine — Montage
16:00 At The Zoo
16:30 My Secret Identity
17:00 News Flash
17:01 Fun With Physics
17:15 Road To Avonlea
18:00 Serie — La Lumiere des Justes
19:00 Le Journal
19:15 Magazine — Extra Large
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Murphy Brown
20:00 Magazine — Zero One
20:30 Encounter
21:10 Star Trek
22:00 News in English
22:25 China Beach
23:15 Mission Impossible
23:59 Are You Being Served

PRAYER TIMES

04:27 Fajr
05:45 (Sunrise) Duba
11:19 Dhulh
14:26 'Asr
16:54 Maghreb
18:12 'Isha

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Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826.

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.

Amman International Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691.

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking

Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485

Dr. Jum'ah Abu Dhiab 758848

Dr. Khalil Al Jbali 740740

Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairokh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

ures are expected to drop significantly and skies cloudy to partly cloudy. Rainfall is expected in all parts of the Kingdom with winds westerly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will dusty and partly cloudy, winds southerly moderate with a chance for showers, and seas choppy.

Amman 10/16

Aqaba 14/25

Deserts 09/19

Jordan Valley 14/25

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 21. Aqaba 27 Humidity readings: Amman 37 per cent, Aqaba 50 per cent.

AMMAN:

Dr. Walid Al Masri 675485

Dr. Jum'ah Abu Dhiab 758848

Dr. Khalil Al Jbali 740740

Dr. Youssef Rashid 896301

Ferdows pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairokh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080

Electric Power Company

Al Quds pharmacy 636381

ZARQA:

Dr. Walid Halaseh 982799

Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Dept. 661111

Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company

636381

RJ Flight information 08-53200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalid Maternity 64281/6

Akileh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 6672279

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marka 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)980560



Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday opens the fall exhibition of the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi) (Petra photo)

Queen opens 'Al-Aydi' exhibition

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday opened the fall exhibition of the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi) entitled "Timeless Weaving & New Creations" at Al-Aydi Centre in Jabal Amman.

According to a Royal Court statement, the main theme of the exhibition is the introduction of antique oriental weaving from Jordan, Syria, Turkey and Persia in creative yet practical items that range from handbags, brief cases and desk-sets to jackets, home furnishing and accessories.

Queen Noor expressed her pride in the pioneering role that Al-Aydi has played in strengthening and revitalising the handicrafts industry in Jordan since the Queen first opened the centre in 1979, the statement said.

Al-Aydi Advisor Laurie Hlass said that Queen Noor was approached to open this exhibition because "she has been a significant catalyst in reviving traditional crafts and preserving a unique aspect of Jordan's national heritage."

Al-Aydi, (hands), refers to the "blessed hands of those who create beautiful craft," the statement said.

The hand in traditional Arab culture is believed to bring good luck and keeps away the "evil eye."

Al-Aydi Centre was established by a group of volunteer women, among whom were artist Hind Nasser and heritage collector Widad Kawaar, to preserve Jordan's national handicrafts, develop traditional designs and promote and market local crafts.

According to Al-Aydi

Director May Khouri, "at least 80 families currently benefit from the centre as craftspeople come to us from all over Jordan to help them develop and market their products locally and abroad." Such exports typically include traditional and contemporary gold and silver jewelry, brass and copper work, embroidered dresses and home accessories, hand-woven rugs and straw baskets, colourful glassware, woodwork with mother of pearl inlay and a wide selection of ceramics.

All items have been carefully selected by the centre's quality control team and, according to Ms. Khouri, each piece "has a story behind it about our heritage and our history, which is why it captures the interest of our clients."

Increased corruption cases sent to court

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government is continuing its efforts to fight corruption and violations of laws that affect public welfare, Information Minister Marwan Muasher said Monday, adding that many new cases have been referred to court for legal proceedings.

The minister, in a regular weekly press briefing, did not specify how.

In mid-September, the number of such cases stood at more than 100, with about 150 people involved.

A special committee set up by the government is investigating corruption and bribery involving government officials as well as violations of laws that involve forgery and counterfeiting, endangering public health etc.

A brief summary of a

report that the committee presented to the government said the latest cases involved manipulations with tenders for spare parts purchased by the Greater Amman Municipal Council, tax evasion, and tampering with standards and specifications.

Apart from the case of tenders for spare parts at the municipality, other specific bribery cases involving civil servants included a Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) employee who used to expedite telephone connections in return for money and another who accepted graft in return for services rendered at the Civil Status Department.

Also involved are cases of forgery of government documents, adulteration of foodstuffs, selling of foodstuffs after the expiry of shelf-life by changing labels, marketing locally produced automobile oil as

imported, smuggling of computers, mobile phones and telephone equipment and undercutting the TCC by illegally offering telephone services at lower than TCC rates.

Misuse of government coupons for milk powder was another case.

In many cases, all foodstuffs and other goods and equipment were confiscated.

Dr. Muasher explained that the government looks at all cases of bribery and misuse of government office for personal gains as well as violations of laws related to public health and welfare and government revenues as part of the fight against corruption although some of the cases could not be strictly classified as corruption.

The minister's revelations came as part of a government promise to keep the media informed about the progress in the

fight against corruption — a prominent pledge that the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti undertook when it took office in February.

The special committee has subsequently been set up, and a special judge has also been appointed to hear the cases.

Until July 31, the special committee, which is headed by a senior officer from the General Intelligence Department (GID), sent 63 cases to the general prosecutors' office. Another 38 cases were transferred by end of August.

Some of the related trials have already started, and others are expected to begin soon.

Cases so far unveiled by the committee include:

— Violations of customs regulations, including the removal of goods from free zones without paying duties.

— Smuggling of mobile

telephones, satellite receivers and electronic goods as well as other products.

— Bribery involving Ministry of Supply tenders.

— Adulteration of foodstuffs and animal feed.

— Marketing of imitation products in violation of trademark and patent regulations.

— Unauthorised alterations of land classifications to benefit individuals.

— Robbery of government equipment or material.

— Violations of Ministry of Labour regulations (forgery of work permits and wilfully overlooking the status of foreign workers in return for bribes).

— Forgery of registration books of vehicles and illegal alteration of chassis serial numbers in vehicles.

Japan donates equipment to the Department of Antiquities

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Japanese government will donate \$460,000 worth of necessary equipment for a Department of Antiquities cultural heritage preservation programme, a Japanese Embassy statement said.

The statement delineated the endowment as falling under the auspices of Japanese Cultural Grant Aid.

Documents were signed by Minister of Planning Rima Khalaf Hunaidi, and the Japanese Ambassador to Jordan Takayuki Kimura on Oct. 28.

This programme is slated to help preserve archaeo-

logical remains, currently threatened by environmental degradations, and therefore contribute to attracting foreign visitors interested in ancient remains in Jordan.

The Japanese Cultural Grant Programme supports artistic, cultural and sports activities in Jordan and aids in cultural exchange programmes between the two countries, the statement said.

The programme was first introduced in Jordan in 1982, and has provided equipment to the Kingdom totalling approximately \$5.52 million.



Minister of Health Aref Bataineh Monday opens a joint Jordanian-Spanish medical conference where he stressed the importance of maintaining cooperation between the two countries (Petra photo)

JVA states resolve to end farming dilemmas

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Valley farmers continue to be plagued by various and augmenting problems for which the Jordan Valley Association (JVA) says it is determined to seek resolution.

Association Chairman Mamdouh Adwan Monday stated that the JVA has conducted a study of various agriculture sector problems, suggested resolutions thereof and will duly submit its report to officials concerned.

The Jordan Valley agricultural sector faces numerous and continual problems necessitating immediate solutions, he said, listing such dilemmas as meagre water resources, high costs of agricultural requisites such as fertilisers and seeds, difficulties in marketing produce, and debts incurred by the farmers themselves.

Mr. Adwan emphasised that farmers are finding it increasingly difficult to market their produce especially as imported fruit, and especially bananas, are, he said, "flooding local markets."

The present season has been especially arduous, he said, as local banana farmers are readying their crops for market.

Mr. Adwan also stated that it is incumbent upon the government to resolve this "chronic issue" otherwise local banana producers are destined to sustain losses estimated at JD20 million.

The chairman suggested that the government study local market fruit demand and systematically decide on the necessary supply.

He maintained that local merchants import \$1 million worth of fruit but that the government collects cus-

tomers fees far less than the losses which local farmers sustain.

Mr. Adwan blamed a lack of a methodical marketing policy, an insufficient amount of refrigerated storage facilities, limited air crop transport and the inadequacy of packaging and packing systems as aggravating the situation.

He suggested that the government trash the current system of pricing agricultural products, encourage farmers to grow much in demand cereals and upgrade agricultural sector laws and legislation.

Mr. Adwan cited the area of cultivated lands in the Jordan Valley as totalling 274,000 dunums, including 58,000 dunums used for citrus fruit, 16,000 for bananas, 8,000 for apples and peaches and 192,000 dunums are planted with assorted vegetables.

Ministry explains rise in cigarette prices

By Francesca Ciriaci
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The recent hike in local cigarette prices is due to "higher quality, but also more expensive, kinds of tobacco and paper used by manufacturers," sources at the Ministry of Supply and Customs Department said Monday.

Denying local press reports printed last week claiming that the increase was part of a government manoeuvre to help reduce the budget deficit of the Royal Medical Services — the medical corps of the army — the sources said "local cigarettes are now a bit more expensive, but also possibly less deleterious for smokers' health."

Head of the Inspecting Department at the Ministry of Supply Itidal Abu Fhanab strongly rejected last week's press reports about the possibility of an increase in the prices of

imported cigarettes to be introduced "soon."

Other sources concurred and defined such reports as "unfounded rumours," adding that the increase in local cigarettes prices was "minimum and only applied to a few brands."

In mid-October, prices of selected locally manufactured cigarettes were increased by a few fils.

The two most popular brands of local cigarettes, for example, rose in displayed prices 420 and 480 fils to 450 and 500 fils respectively, a source at the Customs Department said.

While prices of imported cigarettes, range between JD1.050 and JD1.250 (for a pack of 20), local cigarettes cost between 400 and 700 fils.

According to last year's statistics by the Ministry of Health and figures released by the World Health Organisation (WHO), nearly 40 per cent of Jordanians aged over 18 are smokers.

Jordan, Spain open medical conference

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputising for His Majesty King Hussein, Minister of Health Aref Bataineh Monday opened a three-day medical conference, jointly attended by delegates from Jordan and Spain.

Dr. Bataineh stressed the importance of maintaining cooperation between the two countries in the medical arena in general, and specifically in the training of physicians.

At the opening session, the minister stated that 450 Jordanian doctors graduated from Spanish universities in varying specialisations.

"Indeed this is one aspect which tends to bolster cultural relations between

Spain and Jordan and opens avenues for cooperation in other fields," he said.

Also addressing the opening session of the conference, organised by the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the University of Jordan, was President of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) Bassem Dajani who argued for continued development of health and medical cooperation between the two countries.

The association does its utmost to stimulate medical cooperation between Jordan and other nations, he said.

Conference Chairman Ahmad Tamimi stated that

the current conference is the first of its kind and represents Jordan's investment in increasing its scientific and professional cooperation with Spain and Spanish medical institutions.

The conference is slated to create a Jordanian-Spanish Medical Society to promote medical cooperation between the two countries.

Delegates to the conference will review different medical topics, organise a brain and neurosurgery workshop as well as a roundtable meeting on training medical interns.

Dr. Bataineh subsequently opened an exhibition, sponsored by both countries, displaying medical and surgical equipment.

WHAT'S GOING ON

ITALIAN FILM WEEK

* "Nemici d'infanzia" (Childhood Enemies) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "Seismic Status in Jordan and Means of Protection Against Quakes" by Dr. 'Azam Al Hmoud at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* "Timeless Weaving and New Creations" — Home Furnishings and Accessories — at the Jordan Crafts Development Centre (Al Aydi), Jabal Amman, Second Circle, until Oct. 31.
* Jordan Industries Expo at Amman International Auto Exhibit, Airport Road, until Nov. 1.
* Abstract (plastic) art by Sa'id Hadadin at Orfali Art Gallery, Um Utheina, until Nov. 5.
* Bani Hamida Women's Weaving Project '96 fall exhibition "Race the Trend"

at Citroen-Dirani Showroom, Shmeisani until Nov. 3.

* Egyptian products exhibition at the International Exhibition Centre, Marj Al Hamam, until Oct. 29.

* Exhibition of "Visual Forms" by Abdul Latif Al Smoodi at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens St., until Oct. 30.

* Exhibition of children's books at Haya Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.

* Exhibition entitled "Jerusalem Domes, Doors and Windows" comprising photos by Julia Reinhold and paintings by Riham Ghassib at the Gallery, the Inter-Continental Hotel, until Oct. 31.

* Works by Mohammad Nasrallah at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh. Also displaying abstract (plastic) art by Nabil Shehadeh and works by contemporary Arab artists, until Nov. 13.

* "Wadi Al Faynan Art Exhibition" — works by several artists inspired by Wadi Faynan at Balka Art Gallery, until Oct. 31.

* Works by Ghada Dahdaleh at the French Cultural Centre, until Oct. 29.

Minister urges industrial survey

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat Monday presided over a meeting of governorate joint service councils.

Dr. Tubeishat requested extensions of assistance to village councils in order to provide them with services appropriate to their particular needs.

He also called on heads of local councils to license all buildings constructed on land unclassified by the Lands and Survey Department.

The minister urged a speedy and comprehensive industrial survey in



Abdul Razzaq Tubeishat the respective councils to ensure adherence to the environmental protective mechanisms.

Attending the meeting was Ministry's Secretary General Rashdan Rashdan.

AMMAN (Petra) — The Athens Chamber of Industry and Trade Monday signed two agreements with their Amman counterparts intended to promote economic cooperation between Jordan and Greece.

The agreement with the Amman Chamber of Commerce is designed to strengthen trade and economic ties between the two countries as well as exchange economic and legal data and promote their respective import and export sectors.

It also provides for the two sides to organise seminars and conferences regarding economic cooperation thereby facilitating organisational procedures for international fairs held in either of the two cities.

Furthermore, the two sides agreed on investment cooperation and visiting exchanges by business and expert delegations.

The agreement was signed by Chamber President Haidar Murad and Athens Chamber President Dimitris Koftsiolovits who headed the delegation.

Subsequent to the agreement signing, Mr. Murad emphasised the importance of cooperation in private sector investments and further stated that the Kingdom offers encouragement to its private sector to enter into expanded trade and economic deals with Greece.

He called on the Athenian chamber to launch joint ventures with Jordanian entrepreneurs and cited numerous investment incentives to encourage such enterprises.

The second agreement was signed by President of the Amman Chamber of Industry Khalidoun Abu Hassan and is designed to bolster relations between business people in the two countries as well as

launch joint industrial investment projects.

The two sides agreed to provide facilities to the other country's business and industrial representatives for visits and cooperation in modern technology transfers.

Mr. Abu Hassan reviewed activities in which the Amman Chamber of Industry is involved, stating that Jordanian industrial products are currently marketed in 90 countries.

Chamber of Industry sources said that Jordan and Greece had previously signed a 1976 agreement on economic and trade cooperation and that in the first eight months of 1996 Jordan exported JD5.9 million worth of products to Greece and received JD 8.1 million worth of Greek merchandise.

Dole attacks Clinton on immigration, affirmative action

SAN JOSE, California (R) — Republican presidential nominee Bob Dole attacked President Bill Clinton and emphasized the emotional issues of immigration and affirmative action Sunday as he made an all-out effort to win this key state.

A fired-up Dole complained that Americans ought to be "fed up to their eyeballs" with Mr. Clinton and tried to suggest the president faced ethics charges so serious he might not serve out his second term.

At a sun-drenched rally of Vietnamese-Americans, Sen. Dole criticized Mr. Clinton for not doing enough to police California's borders and underlined his support for a controversial ballot initiative to end affirmative action in state hiring, contracting and school admissions.

"There are no limits on what individuals can achieve in this country when they come here as legal immigrants. Because in America what counts is merit and character," Sen. Dole said, standing before a red, white and blue banner that read "celebrating legal immigration, the American dream."

"Quotas, set asides and other preferences that discriminate by race or ethnic-

ity are simply wrong in America... and do violence to the principles of our constitution," Sen. Dole said.

Mr. Clinton opposes the affirmative action initiative. Later, at a Republican steak and oyster feed in Elk Grove, Sen. Dole referred to comments Reform Party candidate Ross Perot made on NBC's Meet The Press suggesting Mr. Clinton and first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton would face serious ethics charges in a second term.

"Then again, Ross Perot suggests that it may not be four more years. Maybe it's going to be so serious next year somebody might be in real trouble. I did not say that, Ross Perot did. But I've thought about it, I've thought about it," Sen. Dole said.

Sen. Dole later denied he was saying Mr. Clinton would be impeached.

With only nine days until the election, Sen. Dole is focusing much of his dwindling time and millions of dollars in advertising in this key state. The majority are tough ads on immigration.

In a sign he intends an all-out effort, Sen. Dole extended his California campaign swing one day until Tuesday.

But a recent Los Angeles

Times poll shows Sen. Dole trailing Mr. Clinton by 20 percentage points in California, which has 54 of the 270 electoral college votes needed to win the White House.

Sen. Dole was acid in complaining about Craig Livingstone, a former aide and one-time bar bouncer who left the White House after ordering FBI files on Republicans.

"They've turned the White House into something else. It's the animal house," Sen. Dole said, complaining Americans should be fed "up to their eyeballs" with the administration.

He slammed the New York Times for endorsing Mr. Clinton Sunday, calling the paper an arm of the Democratic National Committee and an "apologist" for the White House.

Sen. Dole, who tried unsuccessfully to persuade Mr. Perot to quit the race, called on Mr. Perot's backers to support him and said he was pleased by the Texas billionaire's suggestion he would be a better leader.

Mr. Perot said on Meet The Press that "Senator Dole understands combat. He has certainly paid a terrible price, and if you were limited to those two, you'd

certainly, I think every American would pick him, because he understands what he's doing."

Despite his decision to go on the attack on illegal immigration, Sen. Dole showed some political sensitivity about the issue in his speech to the ethnic crowd in San Jose.

He did not repeat his usual call to bar non-citizens from voting or his accusation that the Clinton administration was speeding up citizenship applicants of legal immigrants.

California voters by a wide margin passed an initiative to bar most benefits to illegal immigrants, but it has been held up by the courts.

Meanwhile, President Clinton wooed voters in the Republican stronghold of Virginia Sunday.

Mr. Clinton won key endorsements from the New York Times, the Boston Globe and the Philadelphia Inquirer this weekend, while Sen. Dole picked up the vote of New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

"Republicans complain that Clinton has stolen many of their programmes and ideas, but what Clinton has really managed to steal is the broad centre of the American political spectrum — a position we hope he will keep during a second term," the Inquirer wrote in an editorial published Sunday.

A buoyant Clinton, who has ignored Sen. Dole's broadsides, embarked on a three-day seven-state trip, starting with a rally in Virginia, a state that has not voted to put a Democrat in the White House since 1964 when it supported Lyndon Johnson.

Analysts and polls say Mr. Clinton may win Virginia and several other typically Republican states.

"Most people in Virginia have been voting against members of my party for president for over three decades now and I know how hard it is to break a habit," Mr. Clinton said.

"One of the things we all teach our kids is that some habits have to be broken," he said to laughter from the crowd.

Mr. Clinton also got some good news on the economic front, although it came from an unlikely source.

Congressional Republicans Sunday said the U.S. budget deficit for the financial year that ended Sept. 30 will be about \$109 billion, the lowest in a decade.

They claimed credit for the figure, which is still not official, releasing the data shortly after White House Chief of Staff Leon Panetta hinted Mr. Clinton will have "some good news" on the U.S. budget deficit.



Indonesia's President Suharto (left) presents visiting German Chancellor Helmut Kohl with an award on behalf of the Indonesian Engineers Association Monday. Mr. Kohl arrived in Indonesia Saturday for a three-day visit (Reuter photo)

Kohl, Suharto discuss human rights

JAKARTA (R) — German Chancellor Helmut Kohl and Indonesian President Suharto discussed human rights, including the contentious East Timor issue, Monday, officials said.

German delegation sources said Mr. Kohl had also invited East Timorese Nobel Peace laureate Bishop Carlos Belo to meet him during his stay in Jakarta.

It was not immediately known whether Bishop Belo had accepted the invitation and there was no answer from his home in the East Timor capital, Dili. Church sources said he might see Mr. Kohl before the chancellor leaves for Manila Tuesday morning.

A major focus of the visit is trade and economic ties, with a number of ministers and businessmen accompanying the chancellor.

Germany is Indonesia's largest European market with two-way trade estimated at \$4.46 billion in 1995, up 75 per cent from 1990.

Indonesia's State Secretary Mardiono told reporters after the meeting between Mr. Suharto and Mr. Kohl that they had discussed human rights issues.

Mr. Kohl, who arrived for his fourth visit to Indonesia Saturday and spent Sunday relaxing and fishing with

Mr. Suharto, had been expected to raise the matter of human rights.

"The president (Suharto) explained about the implementation of human rights in Indonesia and also about the development in East Timor," Mr. Mardiono said.

"The implementation of human rights certainly cannot be separated from the nation's historical values," he added.

Bishop Belo was joint recipient of the 1996 Nobel Peace award with self-exiled East Timorese resistance leader Jose Ramos Horta. The award to Ramos Horta — who called on Mr. Kohl to raise East Timor during his Jakarta visit — has angered many Indonesians.

Indonesia invaded the former Portuguese colony in December 1975 and declared it Indonesia's 27th province the following July in a move the United Nations has refused to recognise.

Mr. Suharto presented Mr. Kohl with an honorary membership in the Indonesian Engineers' Association during the chancellor's official visit to Merdeka (freedom) Palace, where he was greeted with an artillery salute under overcast skies.

In a speech following the

award, Mr. Kohl said the future achievement of political leaders would be measured by their capability to meet challenges based on the principles of social justice and democracy.

He said that in this regard human rights was "central to the future" and was an issue that should be discussed among friends.

Mr. Kohl also praised Indonesia for having one of the world's dynamic economies.

"The general situation which is stable, with sustained high economic growth and high achievements in education and the sciences, has made Indonesia one of the key countries in the southeast Asia region," he said.

He also called for increased trade and cooperation between the two countries, which he said should also involve small and medium industries.

"I see possibilities for further cooperation, including the development of infrastructure and Indonesia's natural resources," Mr. Kohl said.

He specifically mentioned such areas as expansion of regional airports and air transport, the railway network, power generation and telecommunications.

Pakistani police, Islamists clash again

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani police skirmished with Islamist militants for the second day in Islamabad and the nearby city of Rawalpindi Monday, filling streets with teargas and smoke from burning tyres, witnesses said.

Security forces again blocked access roads to the capital to prevent Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) party demonstrators from reaching parliament in Islamabad for a planned sit-in to protest at alleged corruption under Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

Several hundred protesters fought cat-and-mouse battles with police in the Aabpara district of the capital. They set fire to tyres and wooden crates collected from nearby shops as police posted on rooftops fired teargas canisters to disperse them.

Police hunting for young JI militants searched the bathroom of a nearby mosque and detained several people in the streets, apparently at random, witnesses said.

Demonstrators caught one policeman and beat him, finally letting him run off with his trousers in tatters, but keeping his riot shield. They seized a teargas launcher from another policeman, but could find no ammunition for it.

Several teargas canisters fell among houses in the residential district, where one woman carrying a child rushed in panic out of her house, tears streaming from her eyes.

Small groups of protesters also threw stones at police on a main road in Rawalpindi that leads to Islamabad. Police responded with volleys of teargas. No casualties were reported.

At least 29 people were injured in similar clashes Sunday and newspapers said up to 100 had been hurt, none seriously.

JI leader Qazi Hussain Ahmed said his party would keep up the struggle against Ms. Bhutto's three-year-old government.

"Such blockades and impediments cannot weaken our spirit and determination," the English-language daily The News quoted him as saying. "We will continue our struggle till the last."

He said JI would stage countrywide strikes and protests Monday if its supporters were prevented from reaching parliament.

"We have come out on the streets to wage jihad (holy war) and bring Islamic revolution in the country," he said.

Cellular telephone services went dead Monday morning after resuming for a few hours Sunday. They were cut off Saturday night, apparently to disrupt JI communications.

Paramilitary troops were brought into the capital to guard parliament, the prime minister's secretariat, the president's house, the foreign ministry and the diplomatic enclave.

Most schools and universities in Islamabad remained closed for a second day and many people did not go to work.

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Yeltsin orders preparations to dismiss Kozhakov

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has instructed officials to sack his former confidant Alexander Kozhakov from his remaining post as army general, ITAR-TASS news agency reported Monday.

The agency said Mr. Yeltsin Sunday had signed an order instructing Mr. Kozhakov's successor as head of the Presidential Guard, Yuri Krapivin, to "present documents in order to dismiss" Mr. Kozhakov.

The Russian television station RTR had reported Sunday that Mr. Yeltsin had already sacked Mr. Kozhakov. It quoted a Kremlin source.

Mr. Kozhakov's press service, contacted by AFP, refused to comment on the report.

Mr. Yeltsin accused his erstwhile close confidant and former friend "of making untrue statements about the president and members of his family and allowing the release of confidential information, which he obtained in the exercise of his duties."

ITAR-TASS quoted the presidential instruction as saying:

"The threats publicly made by Alexander Kozhakov to disclose information which he obtained through his functions were designed to discredit a number of senior state officials," the instruction said.

These declarations "amount to gross violations of military obligations, ethical standards and besmirch the honour of a Russian officer," Mr. Yeltsin said.

Mr. Kozhakov, who for 11 years had worked as Mr. Yeltsin's chief bodyguard and was an intimate friend of the Russian leader, was dismissed between the two rounds of the June-July presidential elections for his hawkish views.

But the former KGB guard maintained that he had not been officially dismissed but was temporarily not carrying out his duties and was still getting his salary as a general in the Russian Armed Forces.

Since his dismissal, Mr. Kozhakov has emerged from the shadows to launch an election campaign for a seat in the lower house of parliament.

He has forged an alliance with another ousted Kremlin strongman, Alexander Lebed, and most notably warned his enemies in the Kremlin of "compromising material" which could be used against them in future presidential elections.

He was particularly savage in his denunciation of the powerful Kremlin Chief of Staff, Anatoly Chubais, who he said was taking advantage of the presidential illness and using the president's influential daughter, Tatyana Dyachenko, to amass personal power.

Mr. Chubais is widely believed to have been instrumental in ousting Mr. Kozhakov from his hugely influential Kremlin role.

Last week he told the British Guardian newspaper of that Mr. Yeltsin, currently preparing for heart bypass surgery, was "an ill old man" who should step down.

But Mr. Kozhakov himself has been spattered in the furious Kremlin mud-slinging which has intensified with Mr. Yeltsin's prolonged absence, and is currently fending off charges that he ran a multi-million-dollar racketeering operation during his Kremlin years.



Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole hugs two Vietnamese-American children in traditional Vietnamese dress at a campaign rally at a high school in San Jose Sunday. Sen. Dole stepped up his attacks on illegal immigration and affirmative action in California (Reuter photo)

North Korea is courting U.S. with new overture—report

SEOUL (AFP) — North Korea is courting the United States with a new overture that includes an offer to "recognise" the presence of U.S. troops in rival South Korea, a newspaper here said Monday.

The overture was made last week when Paek Nam-Jun, a presidium member of the North's Democratic Front for the reunification of the fatherland, visited Beijing, said the independent Hankyoreh newspaper in Seoul.

South Korean officials described the overture as a "trial balloon," which came as Washington and Pyongyang are at odds over the detention of a U.S. citizen in the North on charges of spying for South Korea.

The newspaper quoted diplomatic sources in Beijing as saying Paek briefed Chinese leaders on Pyongyang's proposals, which it said had already been relayed to U.S. President Bill Clinton through secret U.S.-North Korean contacts.

Paek also explained North Korea's plan to make "sweeping concessions" on matters such as the repatriation of the remains of American soldiers killed during the 1950-53 Korean war, the newspaper said.

Some 37,000 U.S. soldiers are stationed in South Korea under a mutual defense pact which followed a truce agreement in 1953 that left the Korean peninsula still divided.

North Korea has repeatedly said the U.S. troops have no right to be on the peninsula. Chinese officials believe the North Korean overture appears designed to counter an anti-Pyongyang campaign by

Seoul over last month's incursion of a North Korean submarine into South Korean waters, the newspaper said.

"This may be a trial balloon aimed at ending its further isolation," a South Korean government analyst told AFP.

The analyst called the overture "plausible" in view of Pyongyang's desperate bid to improve ties with Washington.

Under a 1994 agreement, North Korea froze its controversial nuclear program. In return, Washington has promised economic and political benefits.

"Throughout this year, North Korea has eased its campaign against the presence of U.S. troops," the analyst said.

But South Korean officials have urged Washington to be cautious in its approach towards Pyongyang.

"We oppose any direct contact between Washington and Pyongyang, without Seoul's involvement," Prime Minister Lee Soo-Sung told parliament Monday, demanding the North apologize for the submarine incursion.

Unification Minister Kwon O-Kie, also addressing parliament, urged the North to accept a four-party peace talks proposal which would involve the two Koreas, Beijing and Washington.

On Monday, U.S. deputy assistant Secretary of State Charles Kartman met with South Korean officials in what the U.S. embassy described as "routine consultations" ahead of an annual U.S.-South Korean security meeting in Washington set for Oct. 31.

2 more N. Korean defectors to reach Seoul

SEOUL (AFP) — Two North Korean defectors are on their way to South Korea, ending seven months of exile in an unidentified third country, security authorities said Monday.

The two, who had stayed abroad since their escape from the impoverished North in March, will arrive late Monday by air, the Agency for National Security Planning said.

The agency identified the two as Ho Chang-Gul, 47, and his 17-year-old daughter, a middle school student in south Pyongyang province.

The defector had been jobless after retiring in October 1994 from a propaganda organisation affiliated with the ruling Communist Workers' Party, the agency said.

He sought asylum in a South Korean diplomatic mission abroad and told South Korean officials that he had been fed up with Communist rule, it said.

Yeltsin orders preparation to dismiss Korzhakov

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin has ordered officials to sack his former confidant Alexander Korzhakov from his main post as army general. ITAR-TASS news agency reported Monday.

The agency said Yeltsin signed an order naming Mr. Korzhakov's successor as head of the Presidential Guard, Lt. General Kravtsov, to "prevent any attempts in order to dismiss" Mr. Korzhakov.

The Russian television station RTR had reported Sunday that Mr. Yeltsin had already sacked Korzhakov. It quoted Kremlin sources.

Mr. Korzhakov's service, contacted by the report, declined to comment.

Mr. Yeltsin's advisers while close to the president, and former friend, making untrue statements about the president's members of his staff and allowing the release of confidential information, which he obtained the exercise of his duties, ITAR-TASS quoted presidential instructions.

"The threat posed by Mr. Korzhakov's actions to the stability of the state is obvious," the instructions said.

Mr. Yeltsin was said to have been "deeply shocked" by the actions of his former confidant, and to have decided to sack him.

Mr. Yeltsin's advisers while close to the president, and former friend, making untrue statements about the president's members of his staff and allowing the release of confidential information, which he obtained the exercise of his duties, ITAR-TASS quoted presidential instructions.



Zairean civilians and Rwandan refugees flee from fighting around Bukavu as they try to escape rumours of an impending rebel attack. Some 500,000 Rwandan refugees are thought to be on the move from fighting and shelling between ethnic Tutsi rebels and Zairean troops (Reuters photo)

Queen Elizabeth starts visit to Thailand

BANGKOK (AFP) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth II Monday started a five-day state visit to Thailand as the guest of King Bhumibol Adulyadej, the world's longest-reigning monarch.

Queen Elizabeth and her husband, Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, were welcomed at Bangkok's military airport by King Bhumibol and other members of the Thai royal family.

The queen, dressed in dark green with a matching multi-layered hat and black gloves, was given a 21-gun salute after she descended from the flight from London.

She was led down a red carpet under a green parasol on the airport tarmac to inspect a guard of honor, before being whisked off in a motorcade through the cleared streets of the normally traffic-clogged Thai capital.

The queen, travelling in King Bhumibol's cream-coloured Rolls Royce, swept down the Thai capital's Royal Avenue under specially-erected gold arches flanked by elephant-head statues and Thai and British flags.

Hundreds of excited children lined the route, waving Thai and British flags at the convoy as the two monarchs went to a small Pavilion where she was presented with the keys to the city.

"I am grateful for your kind words and this key to the capital city of Thailand," the queen said in a brief speech in the Pavilion after being greeted by dignitaries and women spreading flower petals at her feet.

"We are very pleased to pay a return visit to your hospitable city which gave us an equally friendly reception in 1972," the queen said, adding that the city had seen considerable change in the past three decades.

Queen Elizabeth was later to meet members of the British, Thai and Bangkok-based foreign media before being the guest of honor of King Bhumibol and Queen Sirikit at the royal palace.

The queen's first visit to Thailand in 24 years comes as King Bhumibol marks his 50th year on the throne, making him the longest reigning Thai monarch.

Queen Elizabeth, who has reigned herself for 44 years, is scheduled to participate in cultural and commercial events during her stay, including celebrations for the king's golden jubilee.

On Tuesday, she is to visit Ayutthaya, the ancient capital of Siam in central Thailand, for a light and sound extravaganza, and attend a royal barge procession through Bangkok later in the week.

In addition to attending functions in her honor, Queen Elizabeth will also inspect Rolls Royce engines being developed for aircraft in the Thai Airways International fleet and inspect a Royal Agricultural Studies Centre.



Queen Elizabeth (left) and Thai King Bhumibol Adulyadej (right) are shaded from the sun during the welcoming ceremony at Bangkok military airport Monday. The Queen and her husband The Duke of Edinburgh are in Thailand on a five-day visit to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Thai king's accession to the throne (Reuters photo)

Japan coalition hopes suffer new blow

TOKYO (AFP) — Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) held new coalition talks Monday but again failed to narrow policy differences with its former partners, officials said.

Top officials from the LDP, the Social Democratic Party (SDP) and the New Party Sakigake took part in the second round of talks.

They agreed to meet again Tuesday, but SDP Secretary-General Shigeru Ito indicated the prospects for a coalition with the LDP were dim. He said "it will be difficult to reach an all-out agreement."

The three parties agreed there should be a review of the electoral system for the lower house to reduce the number of lawmakers. But the conservative LDP, the largest party in parliament, was reluctant to accept tough conditions set by the left-wing SDP.

"We remained apart with the LDP over a total ban on corporate donations and the eventual withdrawal of U.S. Marine Corps" from the southern island of Okinawa, an SDP official said.

The LDP, which governed for almost four decades up to 1993, won 239 seats in the house of representatives election on Oct. 20, but remains 12 seats short of a majority in the 500-seat chamber.

The Socialists made a series of policy reversals under former Prime Minister Tomichi Murayama to be part of the old coalition with the LDP, and this is believed to have driven away many supporters.

Mr. Hashimoto's bargaining position in the tough talks was seen as being strengthened by a victory in Sunday's gubernatorial race in his home prefecture of Okayama in western Japan.

Masahiro Ishii, an LDP-backed independent, won by a narrow margin. But his victory is likely to enhance Mr. Hashimoto's influence and position.

The Okayama election was a new blow to the main opposition New Frontier Party (NFP) or Shinshinto, which lost four seats to take just 156 in the general election.

"Yesterday, I felt like praying, but now I am relieved," Mr. Hashimoto told reporters Monday.

Mr. Ishii, a 50-year-old former construction ministry bureaucrat, got 441,696 votes to the NFP-backed Satsuki Eda's 435,984.

Mr. Eda, 55, a former state minister of the science and technology agency, ran as an independent backed by the NFP, the SDP and two other smaller groups.

Shelling, shooting continues around Zairean city of Bukavu

BUKAVU, Zaire (R) — Shells exploded close to the eastern Zairean city of Bukavu overnight as aid agencies scrambled to help some of an estimated half a million people uprooted by fighting between Tutsi rebels and Zairean troops.

Reuters journalists heard sporadic shooting in Bukavu overnight and some shelling to the southwest of the city but it was unclear who was responsible.

"There was shooting here, there and everywhere and we heard soldiers going past in the night," said a resident of a district in southwest Bukavu. Asked if he would flee the lakeside city, he said: "If we leave, where do we go?"

The handful of aid workers left in Bukavu Monday met military authorities to try to arrange for distribution of emergency medical supplies.

In the city of Goma, 140 kilometres north of Bukavu, aid workers said they planned to start distributing high protein biscuits to children, the old and the sick in Mugunga Camp, swollen by 110,000 new refugee arrivals over the weekend.

"This is the emergency phase so we want to ensure there is enough water and food to avoid such diseases as cholera," said Panos Mountziz, spokesman for the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

"There are also 10,000 Zaireans who arrived in Mugunga from a town near Kibumba Camp, which was emptied by fighting Friday night. We are treating everyone the same," Mr. Mountziz said.

"Goma was very quiet overnight so we are increasing water pumping hours to Mugunga and planning to have communal defecation areas and we are doubling the cemetery capacity," he added.

He said buses would be sent to Mugunga to carry back to Rwanda any refugees who wanted to go. The U.N. World Food Programme (WFP) said an estimated 700 Rwandan refugees and 3,300 Zaireans fled across the border to Rwanda Sunday.

"We will be pushing the message through loudspeakers that the choice is yours but we think you should consider going back to Rwanda," said Mr. Mountziz, adding several women had given birth on the road.

He said UNHCR estimated some 500,000 people — most of them Rwandan and Burundian refugees — had been uprooted by more than a week of fighting in eastern Zaire between Tutsi rebels and Zairean troops.

A total of 200,000 Rwandan Hutu refugees emptied Kibumba Camp over the weekend after an attack in which four refugees were killed, according to aid workers.

For the Hutu refugees, a return to Rwanda which they fled two years ago would be a gamble. Many are afraid of reprisals in Rwanda for the genocide of Tutsis in 1994 by Hutus.

Amid the panic and confusion, the United Nations appealed for states in the region to open up humanitarian corridors.

"A catastrophe greater than the one we knew in 1994 is what worries me most," U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Sadako Ogata said Sunday in Geneva.

"I appeal to the combatants: Please spare the refugees and local populations." Western nations advised their citizens to leave Zaire. The appeals came most notably from the three countries with the greatest clout in the tormented region — the United States, France and Belgium, the former regional colonial power.

International aid agencies evacuated most of their staff Saturday from Bukavu, the south Kivu provincial capital, under threat of attack by advancing Banyamulenge Tutsi rebels.

The Banyamulenge rebels, from a 300,000-strong community that migrated from what is now Rwanda to Zaire 200 years ago, have already taken a string of towns in districts around Bukavu.

The armies of both Rwanda and Burundi, Zaire's small neighbours to the east, are dominated by the Tutsi minorities and diplomats fear they are being drawn into the conflict.

Zaire says Rwanda is sending troops to support Tutsi rebels, a charge Rwanda denies.

Burma frees Suu Kyi aide, removes blockades

RANGOON (Agencies) — Burma's military government Monday released a top National League for Democracy (NLD) official detained last week for questioning over a recent student protest, a family member and NLD sources said.

Kyi Maung, deputy chairman of the NLD and a close advisor to Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, was picked up by the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) on Oct. 23 for questioning over his alleged role in the student protest.

"He was returned home at 12.45 p.m. (0615 GMT) today," a family member said by telephone.

Official confirmation of his release was not immediately available.

Separately, the government Monday removed blockades barring access to the road leading to Ms. Suu Kyi's house, witnesses said.

They said the blockades, which were put up last Tuesday, were removed at around 0700 GMT.

Mr. Kyi Maung's detention and a fresh crackdown on Ms. Suu Kyi's NLD by the SLORC sparked widespread condemnation from Western nations and human rights organisations.

Kyi Maung, 75, was in Rangoon's infamous Insein Prison from 1980 to 1995 for his involvement in the democracy movement.

A government official said last week that Mr. Kyi Maung was being held for questioning in a guesthouse to find out if he had advised two students involved in a protest against the SLORC on Oct. 23.

Mr. Kyi Maung was seen talking to two student leaders the day before up to 1,000 university students staged the sit-in demonstration about two kilometres from Ms. Suu Kyi's residence, the official said.

The SLORC accused the NLD, especially Mr. Kyi Maung, of colluding with the students in the protest to foment unrest.

Students involved in last week's demonstration said it was apolitical, and held to protest the authorities' rough handling of three students who were briefly arrested following a quarrel at a restaurant.

A similar scuffle in a tea-shop in 1988 sparked nationwide outrage against the former military regime, leading to pro-democracy street demonstrations that left thousands dead or in jail.

The SLORC had blocked vehicle and pedestrian access to University Avenue, the road on which Ms. Suu Kyi's house is located, for most of the past month in an effort to stop various meetings of the NLD from taking place.

Last week the checkpoints, manned by heavily-armed security police, were set up to prevent Ms. Suu Kyi from holding an NLD meeting at her house, a government official said.

The barricades have also stopped Ms. Suu Kyi from giving her regular weekend speeches to supporters at her front gates for the past five weekends.

However, NLD sources said Sunday that Ms. Suu Kyi had left her residence recently and had been able to hold meetings with senior members of her party at her home.

The NLD won a landslide victory in a 1990 election, but the SLORC never recognised the results.

EU adopts Burma sanctions

Meanwhile, Burma's military rulers were banned from visiting European Union (EU) countries under a package of sanctions adopted by EU foreign ministers Monday.

The sanctions, aimed at stepping up international pressure on the junta, requires EU governments to turn down visa applications from members of the SLORC, their families or their senior military and security officials.

The ministers also introduced a ban on high-level governmental contacts and reaffirmed measures already taken against SLORC.

These are:

- The expulsion of all military personnel from Burmese embassies in EU states and the withdrawal of EU military attaches from Rangoon;
- An arms embargo covering munitions and military equipment;
- The suspension of all bilateral development cooperation with the exception of humanitarian assistance and programmes to relieve poverty or promote human rights.

In a statement, the ministers expressed concern at the absence of progress towards democratisation and at the continuing violation of human rights in Burma, noting that the SLORC had demonstrated no willingness to respond to the EU and the United Nations' concerns.

In particular, the ministers said the EU "deplores the practice of torture; summary and arbitrary executions; forced labour; abuse of women, political arrests, forced displacement of the population and restrictions on the fundamental rights of freedom of speech, movement and assembly."

They called on the SLORC to "enter into meaningful dialogue with pro-democracy groups with a view to bringing about national reconciliation."



Kyi Maung, 75, (right), is seen in this file picture with Burmese pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi on top of the gate of Ms. Suu Kyi's house in Rangoon during a weekend speech. National League for Democracy officials said the military government has freed Mr. Kyi Maung from detention (Reuters photo)

Bulgaria opposition wins 1st round vote

SOFIA (AFP) — Rightwing opposition leader Peter Stoyanov won the first round of Bulgaria's presidential election with 44.38 per cent of the votes, the electoral commission said Monday.

He will take on Ivan Marazov of the ruling former Communists, who won 26.97 per cent, in a run-off vote next Sunday.

The commission said these results were based on a tally of votes in 28 of the country's 31 electoral districts in Sunday's first round.

A third candidate, George Ganchev, won 21.7 per cent of the votes. Mr. Ganchev represents the Business Bloc (BBB) which defends the rights of small and medium-sized companies, and ran a campaign rubbishing the policies of the two main candidates, ten candidates representing an assortment of small leftist parties that might throw their support behind Mr. Marazov in the second round won 6.95 per cent of the votes.

The electoral commission said Sunday that turnout was just over 60 per cent, and provided no new figures Monday. That figure is much lower than in most Bulgarian elections, where turnout is usually around 75 per cent.

After the announcement of the figure Sunday, Mr. Marazov called on those who had failed to vote Sunday to go to the polls in the second round in an acknowledgement that his score had suffered through low turnout.

Incumbent head of state Zhelev Zhelev was not standing for a second term, having lost to Stoyanov in primaries in June.

Mr. Zhelev is a Conservative but the outgoing government is dominated by former Communists.

ing separatists at a meeting in a region neighbouring Chechnya.

His words were apparently aimed at reassuring Chechen rebels who feared that the deal reached by Gen. Lebed, and later criticised by Moscow, was still valid despite Gen. Lebed's dismissal.

The pact, which ended 21 months of fighting, involved the withdrawal of Russian troops from Chechnya and a pledge to defer a decision on the region's political status for five years.

But both sides have stuck to their public positions on Chechnya's status, with Russia insisting that the region can never split away and the rebels calling for independence.

Moscow soothes Chechen rebels

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's new envoy to Chechnya told separatist leaders in the breakaway region that he would honour the peace agreement reached by his controversial predecessor, but disagreements remain over the deal.

Ivan Rybkin, the mild-mannered former parliament speaker who took over as secretary of Russia's security council from outspoken General Alexander Lebed this month, said he would implement the Aug. 31 peace accord to the letter.

"I want to say clearly that consistency in the work of the Security Council will be ensured," Mr. Rybkin told former rebel commander Aslan Maskhadov and two other lead-

Leftwing opposition wins election in Malta

VALLETTA (AFP) — The opposition Labour Party, which has vowed to keep Malta out of the European Union, won the weekend general election, the information ministry said Monday.

Leftwing Labour took 50.72 per cent of the votes Saturday against 47.80 per cent for the ruling, right-wing Nationalist Party, which has been in power since 1987, the ministry said.

The margin of victory was 7,633 votes out of an electorate of about 275,000.

A third party called Democratic Alternative garnered 3,820 votes but this is not enough to win representation in parliament.

This tiny Mediterranean island has a complex mixed voting system under which the party that wins most votes at the national level is guaranteed a majority in the legislature.

This is the case even if the victorious party wins fewer seats than its opponents on election day; when this happens, the winning party is automatically assigned enough other seats to give it a majority.

This provision came into force after the Labour Party won a parliamentary majority in 1981 even though it got less votes than the Nationalist Party.

Prime Minister Eddie Fenech Adami, head of the Nationalist Party, conceded defeat overnight and asked President Ugo Mifsud Bonnici to name a new head of government.

"Although the final results are not yet official, it is clear that the Labour Party has the majority," Mr. Adami said.

It was Mr. Adami who lodged Malta's application to join the European Union in 1990 and wanted the country to obtain membership as quickly as possible, saying it will bring security and prosperity.

Labour however has campaigned for Malta to withdraw its application, arguing that with membership it will only get swallowed up by bigger, domineering EU member states.

Labour wants to refocus links with neighbours along the southern shores of the Mediterranean, committing Malta to just a long-term cooperation agreement with the European Union.

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Restoring lost confidence

AFTER WEEKS of strenuous negotiations, the Palestinians and Israelis appear to be nearing an agreement on the redeployment of Israeli troops in Hebron. But the Jewish state deserves no credit for the impending resolution of a problem whose reverberation at one point threatened the entire peace process.

On the surface, the delay in sealing the deal over Hebron appears to have been caused by differences over security and other details. But regardless of the seriousness of these details, the major problem is the lack of commitment on the part of the Likud government to agreements that the two sides have signed. As such, Israel is solely responsible for the danger facing the peace process.

The Palestinians were right to refuse to renegotiate points on which agreement has already been reached. So were Jordan, Egypt and other Arab countries which put their full weight behind the Palestinians in stressing that Israel has no choice but to implement the Oslo accords.

Reopening the Hebron agreement would set a precedent that Israel could use in the future in demanding to renegotiate other agreements it has signed not just with the Palestinians but also with Jordan, Egypt and other countries with whom it might reach peace treaties in the future.

The delay in implementing the Hebron redeployment plan has caused serious complications for the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) and the Palestinian people. It has also put the peace process in jeopardy. But the major victim of the Israeli intransigence and lack of commitment to legal obligations are efforts to build confidence between the Arabs and Israel and convince sceptics that peace can be achieved between Arabs and Jews.

The most difficult part of the peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians has yet to start when the two sides start negotiating the future status of the Arab territories that cannot, but be the home of an independent Palestinian state. These talks could have received a great momentum from the confidence that Israel could have built in implementing the autonomy deals. But that was a chance which the Jewish state missed.

That will only make the talks more difficult and the aspiration for comprehensive peace harder to realise. That is a situation whose negativity will reflect on Arabs and Jews alike. It is time the Israeli government realised this fact and took measures to rectify its position.

Implementing the Hebron deal would be the easier part in the efforts to put the peace process back on track. The hard part will be restoring the confidence that have been lost. Peace cannot prevail unless the parties to the talks trust each other. The Israeli government has thus far proven that it cannot be trusted. If it wants peace for the region and for its people, it has to work — and work very hard — to prove its sincerity in pursuing peace. The Likud government has to try and earn the confidence of the Palestinians and the rest of the Arabs. It has to prove that it is a partner that can be trusted.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily Monday expressed appreciation of French President Jacques Chirac's stand towards the Arabs and Muslims, as expressed in his address to Parliament during his visit to Jordan. The president, unlike Bill Clinton, voiced genuine respect for Islam and the Muslims, something which reflects a real change in Europe's position with regard to Islam, said Bassam Emoush. The writer, who is also an Islamist member of the Lower House of Parliament, said that Islam has nothing to do with terrorism or extremism, noting that many of the terrorist acts committed around the world were the acts of non-Muslims. Chirac has admitted this fact and stressed that struggle for freedom against aggression and occupation can by no means be described as an act of terrorism, according to the writer. He said that the French president was clear about the future of Jerusalem which, he demanded, must remain open to all religions, and about Israel's occupation of the holy land, stressing that there can be no just solution for the Palestinian problem without a Palestinian state.

A WRITER for Al Dustour reflected on the crimes which are reported in the Jordanian press and said that lately they have been on the increase. Mohammad Kawash said that the spread of criminality in a small society like that of Jordan is appalling, stressing that reports about rape, robbery, murder and fraud as recur in the daily press have been until recently quite alien to the Jordanians. Expressing pain over this serious transgression, the writer said that all these ills stem from a deterioration of social and economic situation in the country. The unemployment and poverty, which are widespread in Jordan, are bound to give birth to more crimes which are the result of despair, he added. The writer said advanced and developed nations give due attention to social and economic conditions of their population so as to prevent the spread of evil, a policy which should be adopted in Jordan so that social security can be guaranteed.

The View from Fourth Circle

The peculiarities and paradoxes of Arab parliaments

By Rami G. Khouri

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS in Jordan and other Arab countries should prompt us to face an important question that we have evaded for a very long time: Are democratisation, pluralism and parliamentary life in the Arab World meaningful or merely decorative processes? I ask the question because of what seems to be happening throughout the Arab region — the historical unfolding of a sustained process of political liberalisation and participatory politics is having little or no impact on public policy, especially foreign policy. How do we reconcile the fact that Arab democratisation has not impacted seriously on the policies of the Arab states? I am prompted to raise such questions because of two parallel phenomena: 1) In Jordan, our modern, participatory and democratising system is showing significant stresses and weaknesses, especially in the relationships among the parliament, the executive branch and the mass media.

The most noteworthy developments relate to parliament, which is supposed to be the heart and spirit of any democracy. Our parliament is novel, and quite peculiar: nearly one-third of its elected MPs serve in the government, another nearly one-third boycotted its debates on the bread subsidies, another third was instrumental in voting against the compromise subsidies proposals that a parliamentary committee came up with, and several MPs have resigned and others threaten to do the same.

Also, parliamentarians seem to be increasingly sensitive to criticism, especially the satirical kind exemplified by the Nabil and Hisham theatre and television show — to the point that the speaker of the House earlier this month threatened to take legal action against the actors and Jordan Television. Two months ago, opposition MPs attacked the government because they accused Jordan Television of unfair and insufficient coverage of their views.

What do we make of this behaviour by a body that represents the people and holds the government accountable? We can explain it as part of a healthy learning process by which all sectors of government slowly are coming to terms with the new ways of democratic pluralism; or we can also explain it as the consequences of importing a Western system of political values and grafting it onto an Arab-Islamic society that defines itself in very different values.

I would suggest that both explanations are valid simultaneously. Parliament and its members behave this way partly because they are testing the waters and discovering which means of political action are most effective for them, their constituents and their country. The very meaning of pluralism, democracy, accountability, human rights and other basic democratic concepts is still being explored, defined and validated in evolving contemporary Arab cultures such as ours in Jordan — where we use these terms often, but clearly have not yet agreed on what they mean.

The government and the opposition in Jordan both speak of the importance of democratic governance, but in practice both seem to feel more comfortable in those established Arab social and political spaces where asserting the value of personal honour takes precedence over the more humbling notion of compromise as a means of forging a national policy consensus. Our political personalities take great offense at what they consider to be personal insults, but are much less bothered by the fact that they may have little or no impact on policy-making. In mature democracies, the opposite is true: politicians get excited about ideological battles, but tend to shrug off personal comments or criticism.

"The government and the opposition in Jordan both speak of the importance of democratic governance, but in practice both seem to feel more comfortable in those established Arab social and political spaces where asserting the value of personal honour takes precedence over the more humbling notion of compromise as a means of forging a national policy consensus."

Our brand of democracy is proving to be more important as an expression of recognition of the dignity and humanity of others in society, and less important as a functional means of achieving political consensus or public accountability. As such, Arab democracy, as it is evolving, is more a reflection of tribal cultural values than it is a purveyor of ideological governance systems.

Parliament and its members also behave this way partly because what they do may not matter very much in the end, given the wider realities of Arab political democratisation. These wider realities are captured in the fact that: 1) Throughout the Arab World, we have had many parliamentary elections and changes in governments in the past decade, yet nowhere have democratically elected political forces caused incumbent Arab governments to change their policies in any significant way. We have had some symbolic actions that impact, if at all, on just a few individuals, such as the Jordanian parliament's post-1989 corruption investigations of former ministers, the Kuwaiti parliament's forcing an investigation of the business dealings of a member of the royal family, and other such isolated acts, but nothing more significant in terms of changing national policies.

Parliamentary life in the Arab World is not about politics. A quick look around the Arab World makes this very obvious. Arab League states like Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Kuwait, Yemen, Sudan, Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Mauritania, Djibouti and others have all enjoyed some measure of democratisation in recent years, including parliamentary elections — but none of them has adopted new policies on the basis of the citizenry's political views as expressed by a majority of parliamentarians. Established power structures still make the big decisions, which parliamentarians ratify.

This is doubly remarkable and paradoxical in view of the fact that in most Arab elections since the mid-1980s, a recurring majority of voters has tended to express a strong desire for change, mostly by voting for Islamists or leftists-nationalists. The key to appreciating what is happening rests in accurately deciphering the nature of change that Arabs have been calling for. I would suggest that most Arabs have not been calling for radical changes in the policies of their governments, but rather in how Arab governments and states deal with their citizens. The great complaint of ordinary Arabs in recent years has not been the ideology of their government, but rather its autocracy, which in many Arab states has spilled over into dehumanising violence and authoritarianism.

Thus, democracy and parliaments in the Arab World today are not designed to forge new policies. They are primarily social in nature — an expression of domestic tribal acknowledgement and cultural respect, at a crucial historical juncture. The most important role that Arab parliaments play — and the real significance of Arab democratisation, to whatever extent it occurs — is in providing a point of convergence for two vital indigenous elements: the ancient tribal values that maintained the viability and well-being of Arab societies in the past, and the modern system of participatory governance and socio-economic decision making that must increasingly shoulder the responsibility for Arab viability and well-being in the future.

Viewed in this context, Arab parliaments should not be judged according to Western criteria of power-sharing or accountability, for they are neither designed nor able to play these roles — on the basis of current configurations and power flows. They are important testing grounds where new power relationships will slowly emerge, and will allow society to develop more modern governance systems capable of responding to the enormous socio-economic challenges of our times. We should not be surprised if Arab parliaments and parliamentarians seem to spend more time on issues of personal honour than on state policy. For this is precisely their current historical role — the renegotiating of political relationships within Arab society, on the basis of universally accepted tribal values in which ridiculing or ignoring someone are devastatingly hurtful deeds.

'Australia should lead and finally recognise the state of Palestine'

By Ali Kazak

AUSTRALIA'S FAILURE to secure enough international support in its bid for a two-year U.N. Security Council seat, following an extensive two-year diplomatic campaign, is a major defeat for Australia's foreign policy and not to its articulate diplomatic campaign.

Australia's real interests will be best served by learning the lesson of this defeat rather than finding excuses; there is also need for a comprehensive review of Australia's foreign policy to bring it up to date with global changes and make it more independent.

Take for example Australia's Middle East policy, particularly its policy on the Palestine-Israel conflict. It is uneven-handed, outdated, contradictory and not independent.

I remember how shocked I was when I first heard, in a meeting with Australia's then foreign minister Gareth Evans and following my request for Australia to recognise Palestine, that "Australia follows the mainstream European position" on the Palestine-Israel conflict. I responded that Palestine's relations with France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Norway, Austria, Greece and other European countries are all well ahead of Australia as they have given full diplomatic status to the Palestinian delegations in their respective countries, and the delegations are subject to the Vienna Convention. The minister's response was: "What about Britain?" Needless to say this was at a time when Australia was trying to be part of Asia.

Australia's non-recognition of the state of Palestine, its very soft approach on Israel's occupation, the building and expansion of settlements, collective punishment of the Palestinian people and frequent aggression against the Lebanese and the Palestinian peoples are good examples of its biased policy towards

Israel.

Australia's involvement in Palestine stretches back to the turn of this century. During World War I, Australian troops were part of the 10th Light Cavalry regiment which accompanied General Allenby on his march into Jerusalem in December 1918. More than 17,000 Australians were involved in the Palestine campaign, some 1,400 losing their lives. Australia also sent troops to the Middle East in World War II, thereby participating in every international war up to the present, including the Gulf war. Australia has also participated in peacekeeping forces in the region.

At the United Nations in 1974, Australia supported the U.N. Partition of Palestine against the wishes of the Palestinian nation. Australia's foreign minister then, Dr. Herbert Evans, was chairman of the U.N. Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) and played a crucial role in securing a UNSCOP report that supported the partition of Palestine into a Jewish and a Palestinian state; all this at a time when Britain abstained and the U.S. vacillated. Later, as president of the U.N. General Assembly, Evans was instrumental in having Israel accepted as a member of the U.N., although its membership was conditional on its compliance with U.N. resolutions 181 and 194. Needless to say, Israel's non-compliance with these resolutions have never adversely affected Australia-Israeli relations.

The government of Mr. Chifley was one of the first to extend full recognition to Israel despite Israel's massacres in Palestine, the ethnic cleansing and dispossession of 80 per cent of the Palestinian nation and the establishment of a Jewish state on 75 per cent of Palestine, far beyond the boundaries defined by U.N. Resolution 181 which partitioned Palestine. Australia established an embassy in Tel Aviv at the end of 1949.

Forty years later, on Oct. 23, 1986, both houses of the Australian federal parliament unanimously passed a resolution condemning U.N. General Assembly Resolution 3379 which defines Zionism as a form of racism, and calling for it to be rescinded. Australia's parliament was the first anywhere in the world to pass such a resolution. Then Foreign Minister Gareth Evans went to "extraordinary length to help" local Zionists gather support for the rescinding of the resolution by the U.N. General Assembly. In June 1990, Mr. Evans informed the Zionist Federation of Australia that the Australian government "had canvassed the proposed rescission of 3379 with 22 governments in the Asia-Pacific region."

Australian embassies in the Asia-Pacific region were put at the disposal of heads of the local Jewish and Zionist organisations in their campaign to lobby governments to recognise Israel and take a pro-Israeli stand. Australia's Foreign Minister Gareth Evans "was personally involved... (and had) been instrumental in... (securing) beneficial results to Israel."

Senator Evans confirmed in May 1993 that the government had been working behind the scenes to pressure Asian countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, India and China to recognise Israel and establish diplomatic relations with it. For years Australia has pressured the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to recognise Israel's right to exist and U.N. Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, and even made its own recognition of the PLO and the issuing of visas to PLO officials conditional on this.

Australia's direct involvement in the Middle East and in the creation of the Palestinian tragedy underscores Australia's historic and moral duty towards the Palestinian people and makes a mockery of the argument, raised whenever

Australia is requested to improve its stand, that Australia is too far away and not a party to the Middle East conflict.

There are no reasons why Australia should not recognise the state of Palestine. The Australian Jewish community number about 100,000, and trade with the Arab and Muslim countries runs into billions of dollars which far outweighs trade with Israel which does not exceed \$300 million, with the balance of payment in Israel's favour.

"The international community that created the state of Israel in 1948 on the principle of dividing Mandatory Palestine into two states must now carry out its responsibility and insist on the implementation of that division."

On the other hand, the Australian public opinion sympathises with the Palestinian cause. The Australian Council of Churches, the Australian Federation of Islamic Councils, four Trade and Labour Councils, a petition signed by 85 federal and state Australian Labour party members of parliament, and numerous other groups and individuals, have called on the Australian government to recognise the state of Palestine and to upgrade its relations with the PLO. Furthermore, the Council of Arab Ambassadors in Australia also called on Australia to do so in a meeting with former foreign

minister, Gareth Evans.

An article in the Australian Jewish News of August 13, 1993, quoted the Israeli ambassador as saying that of every ten letters the embassy receives only one is supportive. And this month, in the same paper, the well-known Israeli writer A. Yehoshua writes: "The international community that created the state of Israel in 1948 on the principle of dividing Mandatory Palestine into two states must now carry out its responsibility and insist on the implementation of that division."

Since the PLO peace proposal of November 1988, over 125 countries have recognised the state of Palestine and established full diplomatic relations with it; Palestine has also been accepted as a full member by the Non-Aligned Movement, the Islamic Summit, the Arab League, and the Organisation of African Unity (observer status).

On Dec. 15, 1988, the U.N. General Assembly acknowledged the proclamation of the state of Palestine and decided to designate "Palestine" as a permanent observer in place of the "Palestine Liberation Organisation." The vote was 104 countries in favour, two against (Israel and the United States) and 36 abstentions.

Even in Israel, a significant portion of Israelis supports the establishment of an independent Palestinian state and political parties represented in the Knesset, such as Meretz, recognise the state of Palestine. The Israeli Labour Party itself has also lifted its opposition to the establishment of a Palestinian state.

And when adding to all this that right, justice and international law are on the Arab side, not Israel's, the questions, again, are: Why does Australia stubbornly refuse, until now, to implement an even-handed policy by recognising the state of Palestine and establishing diplomatic relations

with it? And how does Australia's pro-Israeli policy serve its interests?

Is it that some of Australia's politicians and bureaucrats find it difficult to free themselves from outdated policies and the intimidatory ways of small, extremist, pro-Israeli lobby groups?

As a country that is historically and morally obligated to the Palestinian people, clearly Australia's interests would best be served by playing a better role to help bring about a just peace to the Middle East, a peace which would see the Palestinian people regain their legitimate rights, including their right to return to their homeland, Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian and Arab territories it occupied in 1967 and the establishment of an independent Palestinian state. This naturally requires from Australia to adopt a moderate and even-handed policy.

recognise the Palestinian state and establish diplomatic relations with it, condemn Israel's aggression and expansion of Jewish colonies in the occupied territories in clear and unambiguous language, demand that Israel end its racial discrimination against its own Palestinian citizens and exercise meaningful pressure towards those ends.

On many occasions, distinguished Australians and members of parliament, embarrassed by the Australian government's Middle East policy, have told me that if Britain or the United States recognise Palestine today, Australia will do so tomorrow. I do hope, however, that Australia will lead and not follow, thereby joining the club of the majority of nations in the world who have already done so.

The writer is head of the General Delegation to Australia and ambassador of Palestine to Vanuatu. He contributed this article to the Jordan Times.

Central Bank taking new measures to boost banking operations, investments

AMMAN (Petra) — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) is taking a number of financial measures aimed at giving the banking sector in the Kingdom further flexibility to stimulate its operations. CBJ Governor Ziyad Fariz announced Monday. Speaking after a visit to the CBJ by Prime Minister

Abdul Karim Kabariti, Dr. Fariz said the new measures will achieve two objectives: Increasing the activities of the banking business in a more effective and transparent manner and boosting local investments and attracting foreign investors to the country. Dr. Fariz said the mea-

asures will give a greater role to the private sector, open up new investment avenues in the monetary markets and economic sectors and will further liberate the foreign currency markets so as to boost the efficiency of the Jordanian banks.

Referring to the prime minister's visit, Dr. Fariz said that Mr. Kabariti has

expressed satisfaction over the recent monetary and financial developments in the Kingdom and approved the CBJ's new moves which, he said, are aimed at opening up further the national economy by liberalising the instruments of the monetary and the financial markets and encouraging increased investments.

Jordan and WTO open negotiations

GENEVA (Petra) — Jordan and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Monday opened negotiations designed to pave the way for the Kingdom to join the organisation.

During the negotiations, which are expected to last two days, the two sides will review Jordan's economic policies in general and its trade policies in particular and are also expected to come to an agreement on a timetable for the next stages of the negotiations.

Industry and Trade Minister Ali Abul Ragheb, who is leading the Jordanian delegation to the meetings in Geneva, delivered an address at the opening session noting that the meeting was paved for by two years of preliminary talks held in Amman.

"It is hoped that the WTO will help divert the Middle East from the course of destruction to the path of construction which can give new hope to its people," said the minister.

He warned that this objective would not be achieved should the prevailing economic conditions in the countries of the region remain unchanged.

He also urged the world community to help the Middle East restore stability and help its people through the coming transitional period so that they can incorporate their economies with that of the world and reap the fruit of peace and justice.

Stressing the need for a comprehensive peace in the

Middle East, Mr. Abul Ragheb said Jordan was playing a pivotal role at the regional and international levels to help achieve that goal.

The minister noted that per capita income in Middle East countries ranges between \$20,000 and \$100 annually but he said that stability, security and peace are bound to help bridge this gap because they pave the way for true and sustainable development.

Stressing that Jordan will be committed to the requirements and conditions of the WTO once the Kingdom joins the organisation, the minister said that WTO membership is a very important step to enable Jordan's goods and services to reach world markets.

Mr. Abul Ragheb voiced Jordan's appeal to the world community to help it join the organisation and benefit from the numerous privileges and incentives it provides.

The minister outlined the Jordanian economic reform programmes noting that the Kingdom has over the recent years embarked on liberalising its trade, lifting restrictions and barriers on trade exchanges and opening the way for privatisation and free competition.

He also briefed the meeting on the challenges that faced the Jordanian economy in the past decade and Jordan's adoption of the international monetary fund programme for economic restructuring.

Mr. Abul Ragheb is accompanied to the meeting by representatives of the ministries of planning, finance and customs.



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti (left) exchanges views with Central Bank of Jordan Governor Ziyad Fariz (second from left). Attending the meeting are deputy governor Michel Marto (third from left) and assistant governor Walid Khairallah (Petra photo)

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL	FRF	YEN	DM
US Dollar	1.5185	0.8205	1.2585	114.20	1.3440	1521.00	1.7050	6.1000	
DE Mark	0.6585	1.0000	0.9360	75.19	0.8845	1001.76	1.1227	3.3796	
GB Sterling	1.5116	1.0684	1.0000	163.95	1.1650	1336.26	1.5468	8.2693	
CHF Franc	0.7946	1.1251	0.9423	90.69	1.0675	1208.57	1.3527	4.0735	
JP Yen	0.0088	1.3292	0.9430	1.1018	1.1769	13.32	149.14	4.4930	
CA Dollar	0.7440	1.1404	0.9655	93.95	1.18	1137.59	1.2794	3.8550	
IT Lira	0.0007	0.9971	0.9074	133.87	0.8828	11.19	3.3703		
NL Guilder	0.5865	0.9101	0.8359	73.91	0.7886	892.44	3.1018		
FR Franc	0.1948	0.2957	0.1208	24.5228	22.23	0.2618	33.17	33.1700	

Energy		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL
Brent	24.95	25.00					
W. Texas	24.95	24.70					
Bony	24.95	25.00					
Dubai	21.95	21.59					
UL Gas	223.00	226.00					

Mid-East Currencies		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4050	0.16545	0.33571	30.4507		
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.4135	0.16895	0.34295	31.0926		
KW Dinar	3.3378	5.06842	2.07125	4.20168	381.243		
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.02901	1.64609	3.34113	302.935		
CY Pound	2.1536	3.2728	1.3372	2.7126	246.25		

Metal Prices		USD	DEM	GBP	JPY	CHF	ITL
Gold (oz's)	393.05	383.55					
Silver (oz's)	4.92	4.94					
Platinum (oz's)	383.75	384.75					
AL (3 Months)	1420	1421					
CU (3 Months)	2027	2028					
Zinc (3 Months)	1052	1053					
Lead (3 Months)	746	747					
NI (3 Months)	7410	7415					

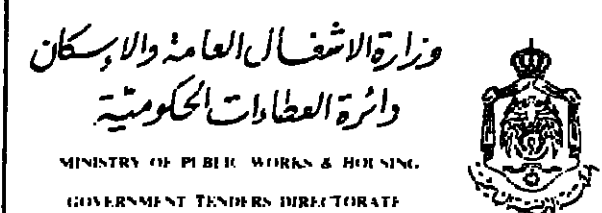
Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)		Period	1	3	6	12	24
USD	5.37	5.50	5.31	5.45	5.75		
GBP	5.88	6.00	5.86	6.02	5.18		
JPY	0.36	0.38	0.31	0.37	0.37		
DEM	2.88	2.88	3.05	3.05	3.18		
FRF	3.25	3.37	3.35	3.46	3.52		
CHF	1.56	1.59	1.59	1.68	1.75		
ITL	7.86	7.57	7.41	7.20	7.06		

Main Equity Indices		Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Open
New York	DOW JONES	6024.91	17.89	0.3	6043.17	6006.65	6007.02
New York	S&P 500	703.08	2.16	0.31	705.4	700.92	700.92
London	FT-SE 100	4025.3	2.9	0.07	4037.6	4020.2	4022.4
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20885.41	145.44	0.7	20907.4	20738.2	20740
Paris	CAC 40	2150.39	-12.04	-0.56	2166.48	2145.23	2162.43
Frankfurt	DAX	2703.83	28.61	1.11	2709.62	2594.69	2674.22

Energy		Commodity	Unit	Price
Spot		Coffee (c/lbs)	123.53	
Spot		Cocoa (\$/ton)	1437	
Spot		Sugar (\$/ton)	325.9	
Spot		Wheat (\$/ton)	166	
Spot		Soya (c/lbs)	22.07	
Spot		Tee (sig/kg)	117	
Spot		Barley (\$/bsh)	2.27	
Spot		Rice (\$/ton)	470	

JOD Cross Rates		Currency	Rate
USD	0.708	0.710	
GB Sterling	1.1367	1.1424	
DE Mark	0.4645	0.4668	
CHF Franc	0.58	0.5828	
FR Franc	0.1375	0.1382	
JP Yen	0.6215	0.6246	
NL Guilder	0.4141	0.4162	
IT Lira	0.4651	0.4674	

* Source: Central Bank of Jordan.



(MODIFICATION NO. 2) INVITATION

Pre-qualification for Contractors Wastewater Collection and Treatment Systems in the Greater Irbid Area North-East Irbid Pumping Station Contract No. (176/96)

1- The Water Authority of the Ministry of Water and Irrigation through the Ministry of Public Works and Housing / Government Tenders Directorate, invites experienced international contractors, who have implemented several pumping stations or wastewater treatment plants in the last 10 years and local contractors who have been classified by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing either as First Grade in the field of Treatment Plants or joint venture of First Grade in Electro-mechanics, Second Grade in Water and Sewerage and Second Grade in Buildings to participate in the Pre-qualification for the construction of the North-East Irbid Pumping Station.

For all contractors a pre-qualification procedure will take place according to the Qualification Questionnaire. Foreign contractors are strongly encouraged to joint venture or associate with local contractors.

2. The project is partially financed by the Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW). The project consists of the construction of a pumping station (designed capacity: Q = 700 m3/h) including all civil, mechanical, electrical and pipe works.

3. Qualification Questionnaires are available from the Government Tenders Directorate at the Ministry of Public Works and Housing in Amman, P.O. Box 1220, Tel (+) 962 606 757, Fax (+) 962 606 751.

4. The latest date for the request of the Qualification Questionnaire is the 5th of November, 1996.

5. Qualification documents are due not later than 1200 hours, Jordan local time, on the 30th November, 1996, to the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

6. Qualification document will be publicly opened at 1400 hours, Jordan local time, on the 30th November, 1996, in the office of the Government Tenders Directorate.

Chairman of the Central Committee
Director General
Eng. Naser Madadha

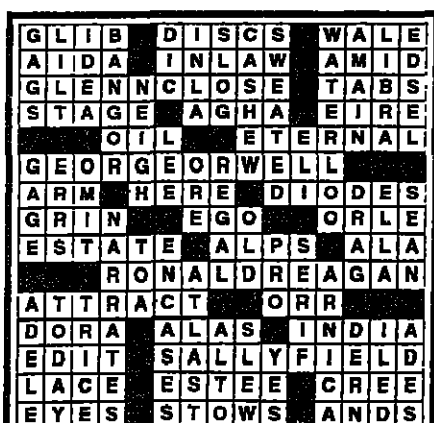
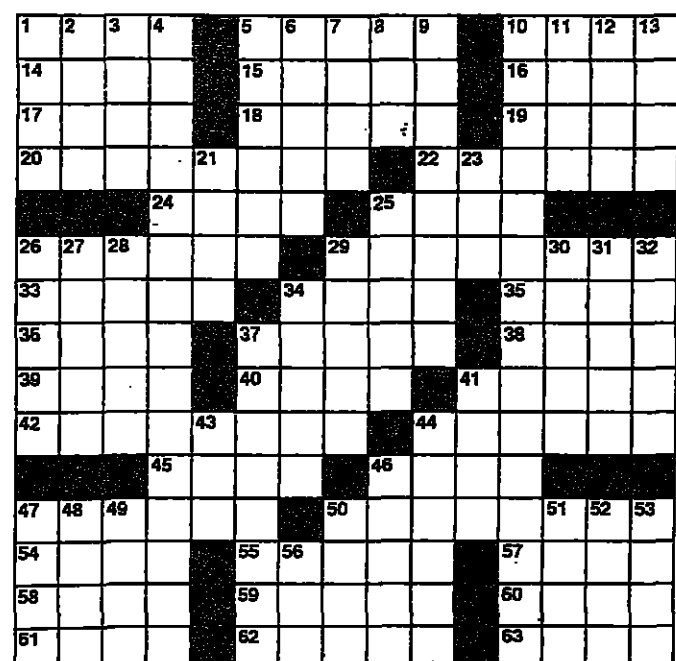
THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- Certain
- European
- Coral
- Long drink
- Colorful fish
- French farewell
- Bonanza
- High-pitched sound
- Plays boisterously
- Country club
- Grabs
- Treat
- Dam
- Composer Alban
- Pardons
- Discards
- Skirt style
- Spanish silver dollar
- Dugout: Fr.
- Coin
- Play possum
- Coward
- Winnie the —
- "Daily Planet" employee
- "Let's Make —"
- Tossing about
- Canteens
- Musical note
- Fly high
- Loose garment
- Went quickly
- Lined up
- Singer Merman
- Approximately
- green
- River in France
- Ebb
- Highlander
- Planted
- Soothsayer

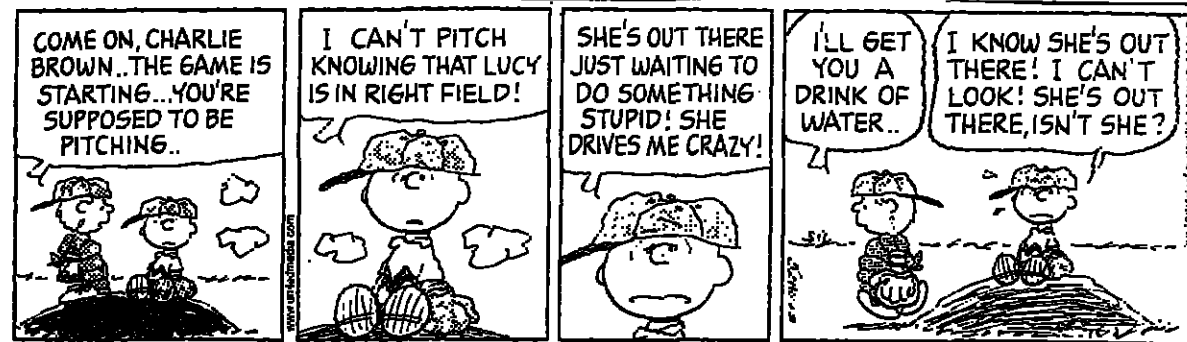
DOWN

- Tennis shots
- Surpassing the usual
- Starchy tuber
- Give up
- Zoroastrians
- Aroma, in London
- Wilted
- Slangy affirmative
- Keeps going
- "The — of outrageous fortune"
- Puzzle fill-in
- False god
- Hooper Kelly
- Sampras of tennis
- Aesthetic pursuit
- Flat-bottomed boat
- Inclines
- Part of T.S.E.
- Petty
- Prompting
- Woodwinds
- Unusual occurrence
- Colonial diplomat, Silas
- Tossers
- Winglike
- Triumphed
- Dies —
- Serf of old
- Active one
- Le Duc — of Vietnam

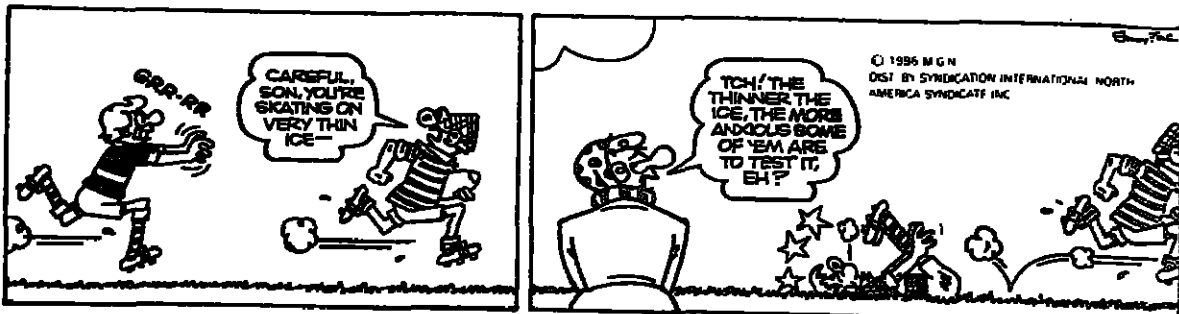


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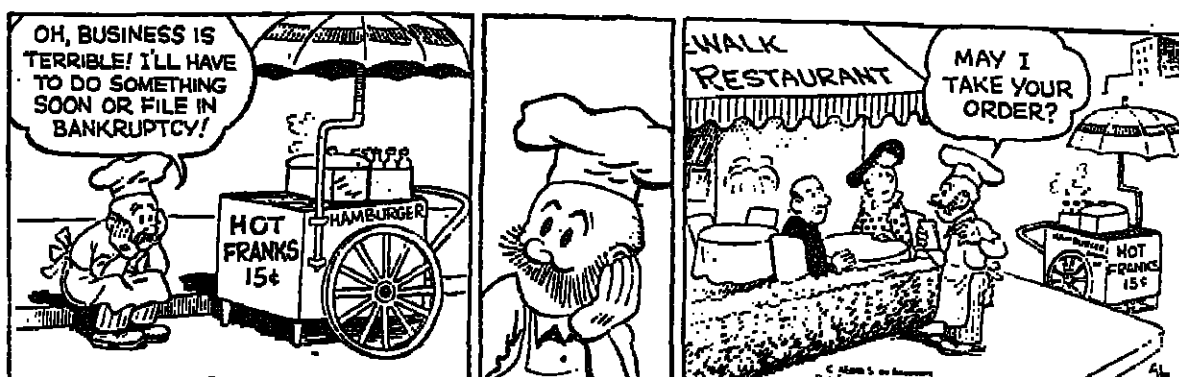
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1996

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get your private aims working on a practical basis today so that there will be much prosperity in your direction. Your mate can be very cooperative at this time, however later this evening is another matter.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 21) Contact good friends who understand your new plans for the day ahead and are willing to assist you. Build good will with your mate and love ones and thereby eliminate difficulties which could be present.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You understand better today what a bigwig expects of you so don't disappoint him or her and you can make your career opportunities more successful. Try to meet these expectations and thereby make the days ahead better.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Situations arise which can provide you an opportunity to express some fine talent which will gain recognition. Later this evening meet with those in authority who can make your career activities much more fruitful.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Get all of your business affairs in good shape today and thereby eliminate any adverse situation for the days ahead. The evening is fine for enjoying the music and drama you prefer the most so relax and gain peace of mind.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You are able to expand in business today and gain a new image during the daytime, however don't change routines or you could be in many difficulties. Later this evening will be good for logical discussions with those in charge.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 23) You get fine creative ideas during the daytime today and you can make good use of them for the days ahead. Try to please your mate with some kind gesture and this will make quite an impression upon his or her.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be as gracious as you can today in doing what your mate most expects of you for the days ahead. Be careful with your valuables so that you do not misplace them when you need them at a moments hand for a special occasion.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) There can be more efficiency at home today, so make every effort to make your loved ones more receptive to your suggestions. Enjoy your own company and be happy being around those who give you great peace of mind.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Any business contacts today should be aware of the fact that you think in a more modern vein with your method of operation. Gain their approval and thereby make your career activities more successful for the days ahead.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Pursue whatever you desire today with courage and conviction and make your efforts with career activities more successful. Permit close friends to assist in your endeavors. Avoid an inate fellow associate who doesn't have your best efforts.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Your ideas are fine today and your judgement is good, so make every effort to make a good impression upon those in authority. You can accomplish a good deal during the daytime and make this evening romantic for your mate.

Birthstone of October: Opal — Tourmaline.

Bahrain plans to set up \$26.5m training centre

MANAMA (R) — Bahrain plans to set up a 10 million dollar (\$26.5 million) job training centre in an effort to promote the Gulf state as a regional training base and find more work for Bahrainis. Local newspapers quoted Labour and Social Affairs Minister Abdul Nabi Al Shula as saying that Moham-

mad Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau had been appointed consultant to the new government project in Isa Town. "The new complex will feature state-of-the-art designs, and it is aimed at meeting our future training needs and human resource development strategy," Mr. Shula said.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Dalabeeh sees improvement in activity at Aqaba port

** CAPTAIN MOHAMMAD Dalabeeh, the director-general of the Ports Corporation, has described the activity at the port of Aqaba as good but not up to the aspired level. "However, if the sanctions on Iraq are taken into consideration, then the activity is good, and if compared to the same period last year, the volume of goods and the number of vessels are also good," Captain Dalabeeh said.

He indicated that a total of 270 vessels arrived at the port last month, adding that this number far exceeded figures for September 1995. He said the volume of goods has increased by eight per cent. In general, significant improvement has been witnessed from the beginning of this year in terms of the number of ships and the volume of goods compared to last year," Captain Dalabeeh said.

Asked about the effect of lowering the transit fees on vessels passing through the Suez Canal to the port of Aqaba, Captain Dalabeeh described the Egyptian decision as a very positive step towards increasing the activity at Aqaba. Noting that some international marine lines no longer dock at Aqaba, the chief of the corporation said the reduction in Suez Canal fees would be beneficial to ensure the continuation and to raise the number of vessels calling at Aqaba.

He explained that the size of the reduction (\$45 per container) may not be large but it still represents a good start especially that it is the first reduction of transit fees in the history of the Suez Canal.

"Anyhow," Captain Dalabeeh added, "we cannot feel a direct improvement from the Egyptian decision on the activity at Aqaba until after the lapse of at least three months when the results will become clear and we can provide an objective evaluation." "In general we are optimistic about the Egyptian decision, and some positive signs can be detected on the horizon" (Al Dustour).

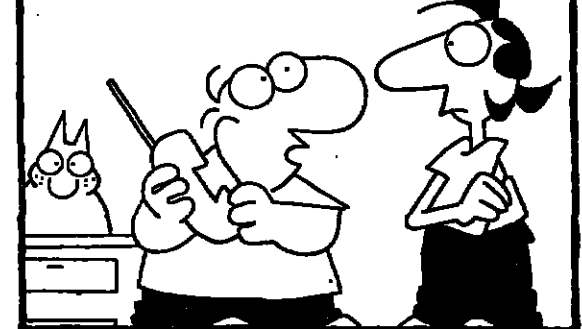
Royal Wings will begin flights to Haifa next month

** ROYAL WINGS will launch two weekly flights to the Israeli Mediterranean city of Haifa in the first week of November in line with a transport agreement between the two neighbours. Jasir Ziad, director-general of the Civil Aviation Authority, said Jordan also asked Israel's permission for increased flights to Tel Aviv. Mr. Ziad and other civil aviation officials were not immediately available for comment.

The Jordanian-Israeli transport agreement, in line with a 1994 peace treaty between the two countries, stipulated air links with Tel Aviv to be followed by Haifa. Royal Wings, a subsidiary of the flag carrier Royal Jordanian, began operations Feb. 10 with two flights to the Red Sea port of Aqaba. Two months later, it added five weekly flights to Tel Aviv. It owns a single aircraft — a 50-seater, Bombardier Dash 8-300 — that meets the demand of both scheduled routes and other occasional unscheduled flights (Al Ra'i).

THE BETTER HALF

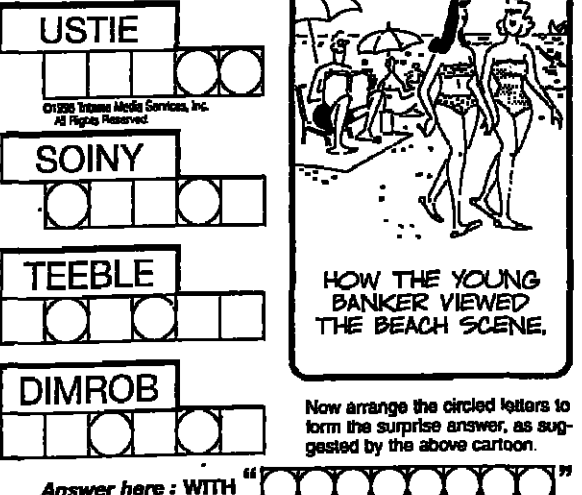
By Glasbergen



"A doctor on TV says it's normal for women to crave chocolate. So I got hot fudge on your half of the pizza."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: WITH (Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: MUSIC, GRAIN, POLICY, SECOND. Answer: She hoped her bread would do this in the contest — RISE TO THE OCCASION

Jordan buys more barley from Syria

By Issam Qadmani
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Ministry of Supply has concluded a deal for the purchase of 150,000 tonnes of barley from Syria to be used as animal feed, according to ministry Secretary General Ahmad Marie Monday.

He said in a statement that 100,000 tonnes of the consignment will be shipped by land and the rest by sea between November 1996 and end of March 1997.

The agreement was concluded following several days of negotiations in Amman between representatives of the Ministry of

Supply and the General Corporation of Cereals in Syria, said Mr. Marie.

Mr. Marie, who noted that the two sides have expressed readiness for promoting their bilateral deals, said that the two sides will settle payment for the barley through a special arrangement between banks in the two countries.

The Ministry of Supply last month concluded a deal for the purchase of 100,000 tonnes of barley during a visit by ministry officials to Damascus. Jordan has purchased 400,000 tonnes of the same commodity from Syria in the past 12 months. Both

these consignments were paid for in a barter deal by exchanging the barley for Jordanian cement.

Meanwhile, the ministry Monday retracted a decision to import frozen poultry meat to suffice the country's poultry need during the month of Ramadan which starts by Jan 10.

The ministry had earlier taken the decision to purchase 2,000 tonnes of frozen poultry so as to meet any shortages during Ramadan and had already awarded a tender to merchants to import the meat.

But the decision was met with stiff opposition by the local poultry farmers

who pledged to produce sufficient quantities of poultry meat to meet the country's needs during Ramadan. They said that imports would harm their interests and that of the country.

Also Monday, the Ministry of Supply decided to allow Jordanians to bring into the country 50,000 20-litre cans of olive oil from the West Bank in the form of gifts to relatives and friends. A ministry source said that the decision was taken in order to meet the expected shortage of olive oil in Jordan this season.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 28/10/1996											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	OFFER PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	
252.000	205.000	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.42	4	100	24635	247.00	246.75	-.25	
1.250	.880	MID-EAST INV. BK.	69.0	0.00	13	8250	8723	1.07	1.05	-.02	
5.250	4.250	THE HOUSING BK.	12.8	2.88	3	4100	19680	4.80	4.80	.00	
1.040	2.550	JOR. KOWALIT BANK	19.2	0.00	1	100	265	2.60	2.65	.05	
1.200	.880	JOR. GULF BANK	5.4	7.69	6	6600	7826	.91	.91	.00	
4.180	3.300	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	17.8	0.00	12	3738	13853	3.72	3.71	-.01	
3.930	1.450	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	P	0.00	2	5250	7613	1.45	1.45	.00	
3.380	1.910	SECT. AL-MAL (BETHBA)	1.2	8.02	2	250	468	1.91	1.87	-.04	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
2.910	1.920	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	5.4	10.42	4	650	1248	1.92	1.92	.00	
2.400	1.850	ARAB LIFE INSUR.	8.1	7.44	4	1300	2785	2.10	2.15	.05	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS											
1.900	1.450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.1	7.50	8	7000	11200	1.60	1.60	.00	
1.850	1.210	TRUST ELECTRICITY	9.5	6.90	1	1500	2175	1.45	1.45	.00	
2.800	2.090	SHIPPING LINES	10.6	7.97	2	900	2254	2.50	2.51	.01	
2.050	1.080	RAIL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	7	2550	3027	1.19	1.19	.00	
1.260	.590	JORDAN TEL. CO.	33.4	0.00	8	7500	4878	.66	.66	.00	
3.650	3.130	JOR. INTL. INV. EDUC.	13.8	5.71	5	650	2252	3.52	3.50	-.02	
1.340	.960	BAHJA EDUCATION	9	0.00	5	3250	3663	1.13	1.13	.00	
2.430	1.700	UNIFIED CO.	9.2	5.71	5	550	959	1.75	1.75	.00	
1.200	.820	UNION LAND DEV.	2	0.00	4	2100	1851	.90	.88	-.02	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
3.770	3.060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.2	2.98	32	68421	236447	3.38	3.36	-.02	
3.550	2.710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	12.8	0.00	6	423	1285	3.07	3.05	-.02	
5.960	4.780	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.1	3.84	6	2444	9087	5.45	5.45	.00	
10.150	8.720	JOR. FERTIL. INDUST.	9.3	8.67	8	296	2737	9.23	9.23	.00	
4.870	3.100	ARAB FRANK. BANK	18.4	5.97	7	606	2030	3.37	3.35	-.02	
6.450	5.650	JOR. CERAMIC IND.	7.5	4.12	1	200	1214	6.07	6.07	.00	
6.000	4.250	BAHJA BANK	12.5	4.40	600	600	2730	4.65	4.55	-.10	
5.800	3.130	ARAB ALUM. IND.	8.7	8.57	1	50	175	3.50	3.50	.00	
.940	.450	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	17	8500	8185	.62	.61	-.01	
1.500	1.060	ARAB PAPER CO.	7	8.93	16	5200	6006	1.18	1.15	-.03	
1.090	.690	ARAB PAPER CO.	8.7	10.17	6	1900	1114	.60	.59	-.01	
1.870	1.030	INTERMED. PETRO. CHEM.	9	0.00	3	1100	1137	1.03	1.02	-.01	
1.150	.830	JOR. ROCKWELL IND.	9	0.00	3	1750	1505	.87	.86	-.01	
3.550	2.280	UNIV. CHEM. IND.	69.3	0.00	2	400	1048	2.62	2.62	.00	
2.010	1.080	ARAB FRANK. CHEM.	23.6	0.00	2	850	1071	1.26	1.26	.00	
3.280	1.500	UNIV. MOON. IND.	4.6	13.33	33	800	1194	1.50	1.50	.00	
2.100	1.140	JOR. INDUS. RESOURCES	17.2	0.00	14	129100	186150	1.41	1.38	-.03	
1.580	.890	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	24.7	0.00	14	10000	9065	.90	.91	.01	
2.460	1.750	EL -RAY READY WEAR	P	0.00	4	8150	35159	1.86	1.86	.00	
1.490	1.050	INTL. TOBACCO	25.6	0.00	12	6350	6878	1.10	1.09	-.01	
2.040	1.010	UNION CH. & VEG.	24.6	0.00	2	300	300	1.01	1.00	-.01	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
111.51	111.51	INDEX	148.47	148.47	254	304778	611883				
GRAND TOTAL											
111.51	111.51	INDEX	148.47	148.47	254	304778	611883				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 28/10/1996											
+.790	.490	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	19.3	0.00	2	1500	720	.50	.48	-.02	
+.800	.580	JOR. TRADE FAIR	15.2	0.00	12	41500	23960	.58	.57	-.01	
+.850	.440	WAT. CONSERV. SERVICES	9	0.00	4	500	75	.51	.50	-.01	
+.940	.700	UNION INV. SOC.	68.9	0.00	18	40300	8899	.73	.72	-.01	
+.1110	.500	ARAB FTH. INVEST.	9	0.00	14	7350	3593	.50	.49	-.01	
+.900	.400	AL-DHILATIN SOC.	19.2	0.00	2	250	88	.38	.38	.00	
+.640	.340	JOR. INDUS. MACH. - JEMCO	9	0.00	2	500	190	.38	.38	.00	
+.910	.510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	9	0.00	3	950	589	.62	.62	.00	
+.1750	1.350	RAIL. CHARGE	9	0.00	2	1150	1554	1.35	1.35	.00	
+.1010	.590	RAIL. CHARGE	9	0.00	2	1750	1040	.59	.59	.00	
+.1100	.510	RAIL. MOUNT. ENG. HAMCO	9	0.00	27	45200	23404	.52	.52	.00	
+.1080	.760	JORDAN STEEL	9	0.00	5	5050	3788	.76	.75	-.01	
+.810	.430	ARAB ELECT. IND.	9	0.00	9	14610	6928	.48	.47	-.01	
+.850	.440	INDOS. ENG.	27.1	0.00	19	12000	5270	.45	.45	.00	
+.900	.630	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	9	0.00	1	2000	1200	.63	.60	-.03	
+.890	.610	RAIL. POULTRY	9	0.00	2	7600	5082	.66	.63	-.03	
+.850	.900	ARAB INV. FOOD FACT.	59.7	0.00	1	250	213	.80	.85	.05	
+.1500	.530	MID-EAST COMPLEX	8.0	0.00	30	28750	19303	.68	.68	.00	
GRAND TOTAL											
158	158	INDEX	212650	212650	106570						

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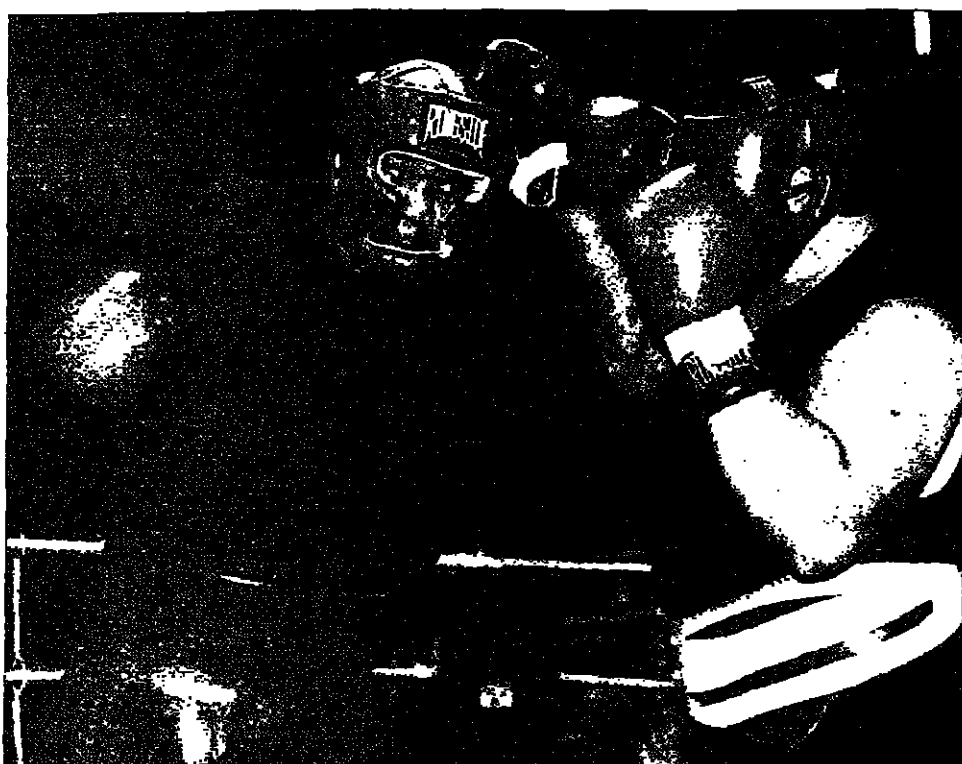
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مكتبة لاسد



World Boxing Union (WBU) heavyweight champion George Foreman (L) works out with sparring partner Steve Cortez at a Tokyo boxing gym. The 46-year-old is to meet fellow American challenger Crawford Grimsley in a WBU title bout on November 3 (Reuters photo)

Foreman says Morrison deserves to fight

TOKYO (AP) — If heavyweight boxer Tommy Morrison, who has tested positive for the AIDS virus, plans to fight on George Foreman's undercard next Sunday in Tokyo, Foreman says he is all in favor.

"I think it's splendid," Foreman told reporters Sunday. "None of us knows where this HIV virus has come from. Nor do we know when it's going to disappear. Trying to be against someone because they have it is almost like being against yourself."

The planned fight between Morrison (45-3-1) and Anthony Cooks (9-5) of Oklahoma has drawn nearly as much, if not more, attention than Foreman's fight against Crawford Grimsley Nov. 3 for the fringe WBU and IBA titles.

Japan has no rules about HIV-positive boxers fighting. It would have been extremely difficult for Morrison, who retired after testing positive for the virus in February, to have made a comeback in the United States. Many states would have refused to license him.

The Tokyo fight is to be stopped if Morrison is cut, and whoever has the most points then will win. Morrison has yet to arrive in Tokyo.

Former NBA superstar Magic Johnson has said Morrison should stay retired because there is more bleeding in boxing than in basketball. Johnson retired after he tested positive for HIV but later returned to play for the Los Angeles Lakers.

Foreman, 47, looking vigorous at about 117 kilograms, said all that didn't bother him.

"Forget about boxing. Forget about sports. Forget about anything when it comes to human beings," he said. "If they are 100 per cent human beings and are

alive, let them survive."

Foreman was also intent on selling his own fight against Grimsley (20-0).

And, he said, he planned to keep fighting until someone knocks him down in the ring.

"That's for the baby boomers," said Foreman, 47, in shirt sleeves to show off his muscles. "We have proven that age, 40 and 50, is no death sentence."

Foreman (74-4-0) became the oldest heavyweight champion when he beat Michael Moore in 1994, two months shy of his 46th birthday. Since then, he has been stripped of both the IBF and WBA titles for not fighting designated opponents.

"I'm not just an old man looking for money. I'm the heavyweight champion of the world," he said, repeatedly making snide remarks about WBA heavyweight champion Mike Tyson being afraid to face him.

"I didn't pick up a belt out of a garbage can. I fought for it."

Neither the Japanese promoters nor Foreman's publicist, Mort Sharnik, would disclose how much either fighter was being paid.

Foreman said he planned to end his career next year after fighting two more matches, in Europe and in his hometown of Houston, Texas.

"You name it, I've had it," Foreman said, joking about the various boxing titles. "And actually I have had it. I'm about finished with all of them. ... I'm close to 50. That's all I can tell you about it."

Asked about lagging ticket sales for the Tokyo fight, he just smiled.

"Maybe I'll go and buy a ticket," he said. The charge would be 10,000 to 95,000 yen (\$88.50 to \$810).

Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco close to clean sweep

JOHANNESBURG (R) — North African countries are on course for a first-ever sweep of all three African club competitions after this weekend's semifinal second leg ties.

Clubs from three Arabic-speaking countries fill four of the six berths in the three finals, with two of them hoping to achieve additional milestones of their own.

Egypt's Zamalek maintained their bid to become the first team to win the African Champions' Cup four times but needed a penalty shoot-out to go through to the final on Sunday.

Tunisia's Etoile Du Sahel, seeking to become the first team to win a second successive Confederation of African Football (CAF) Cup, prevailed in the cauldron of Kinshasa's Kamonyola Stadium against local favorites Vita club on aggregate to secure their place in the final.

They face Morocco's Kawkab Marrakesh in an all-North African final while Egypt's Arab Contractors have reached the African Cup Winners' Cup final.

Zamalek edged out Tunisia's CS Sfaxien 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 aggregate draw in their semifinal in Alexandria.

Trailing by one goal from the first leg in Tunisia two weeks ago, Zamalek achieved parity after just 19 minutes when Mohammed Sabri

AFRICAN SOCCER

converted a penalty.

But despite sustained pressure the Egyptian team could not score again and had to settle for a narrow shoot-out win.

They now play Shooting Stars of Nigeria, who edged out JS Kabylie 1-0 in Ibadan for a 2-1 aggregate victory.

David Ogaga's goal 12 minutes from time set up a repeat of the 1984 final, which Zamalek won 2-0 on aggregate.

Arab Contractors' 1-1 draw away at Canon Yaounde in Cameroon gave them a 2-1 aggregate win and a return to the final of the competition

they last won 13 years ago.

Their opponents will be Zaire's Sodigraf, who also won 2-1 on aggregate after beating Algeria's CR Belouizdad 1-0 in Kinshasa.

Zaire international Mboulua Tondelwa scored his ninth goal of the competition to ensure a first-ever appearance in a continental club competition final for the unfashionable team.

Vita club, who played at the same venue 24 hours earlier, needed just two minutes to start reducing a two-goal deficit from the first leg against Etoile Du Sahel.

Luenede Mulangana converted a spot-kick to put Vita 1-0 ahead but their comeback was effectively crushed in injury time at the end of the first half when Tunisian footballer of the year Zoubier Beya equalised.

Kawkab Marrakesh's progress to the final was a mere formality after they won the first leg against Kenya Breweries 4-1 earlier this month.

In Nairobi, George Maina scored a last-minute goal to give the Brewers a 1-0 second-leg win but it was not enough.

Ivanisevic, Majoli top seeds in Hopman Cup

PERTH (R) — Croatian pair Goran Ivanisevic and Iva Majoli are top seeds for the forthcoming Hopman Cup, the team tennis tournament which they won last year after a temper tantrum from Swiss opponent Marc Rosset.

Organisers said on Monday that Rosset and teenage prodigy Martina Hingis would also team up again and would be seeded second.

The Swiss pair lost last year when Rosset angrily smashed his hand into an advertising hoarding after missing four match points in the deciding doubles and could not play on.

Women's world No. 1 Steffi Graf and Bernd Karbacher will represent third-seeded Germany in the eight-team tournament, which has a two-group round-robin format.

France will be sending Arnaud Boetsch and Mary Pierce, seeded fourth.

South Africa will be represented by Wayne Ferreira and Amanda Coetzer, the United States by Richey Reneberg and Chanda Rubin, Romania by Adrian Panu and Irena Spirlea and hosts Australia by Mark Philippoussis and Nicole Bradtke.

The tournament, which has prize money of A\$800,000 (U.S. \$632,000), runs from December 29 to January 4.

Raymond claims first title in Quebec City

QUEBEC CITY (R) — Fifth-seeded American Lisa Raymond ended the upset run of unseeded Els Callens of Belgium and claimed her first career title on the WTA Tour by winning the Bell Challenge Sunday.

The 44th-ranked Raymond held off the upset-minded Callens 6-4 6-4 to earn a \$27,000 winner's prize and, more significantly, a breakthrough title.

"A whole weight has been lifted off my shoulders," said the 23-year-old Raymond, a two-time U.S. Collegiate champion.

"It feels awesome. This is my fourth final and it would have been disappointing if I hadn't come out with a victory," Raymond said.

The little-known Callens had endeared herself to fans in Quebec this week by addressing the crowd in French and by picking off three-seeded players in a row to reach the final.

The 73rd-ranked late bloomer looked as if she might make it four seeded scalps and her first title when she jumped out to a 3-0 lead with a service break in the second game.

Callens had reeled off a 6-0 first set in ousting second seed Elena Likhovtseva in the semifinal.

But Raymond's deep and powerful groundstrokes took their toll on Callens as the American ran off five games in a row on her way to taking the first set.

"I definitely was nervous and my feet weren't moving at the beginning," said Raymond, who had fewer winners but half as many unforced errors as the 26-year-old Callens.

Rosset clears 1st hurdle at Paris Indoor

PARIS (AFP) —

Switzerland's big-serving Marc Rosset returned to one of his favourite hunting grounds Monday and defeated Alex Corretja of Spain in the first round of the \$2.5 million Paris Indoor Open.

Rosset, runner-up to Andre Agassi here in 1994 and a semi-finalist at this year's French Open at Roland Garros, scored a 6-2, 6-4 victory to reach a second-round showdown with top-seed and defending champion Pete Sampras.

"He had beaten me twice on clay — in Monte Carlo a few years ago and at Hamburg this year," the Swiss number-one said after his win.

None of the seeded players were in action on Monday — the day's main attraction being a late clash between former world number-one Stefan Edberg, who is making his last appearance in the French capital before his retirement at the end of the season, and Germany's Michael Stich, the runner-up at this year's French



Switzerland's Marc Rosset

Open.

In other matches, Britain's Tim Henman was due to play Carlos Moya of Spain.

Australia's Mark Philippoussis prepared to face Frenchman Lionel Roux and Zimbabwe's Byron Black was due to take on Australian Jason Stoltenberg.

Main home interest centred on France's Davis Cup players Cedric Pioline and Arnaud Boetsch. Pioline was scheduled to play Sergi Bruguera of Spain and Boetsch was due to face Australian Todd Woodbridge.

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♠ J 9 7 3	♠ 8 6	♠ J 9 3	♠ J 7 6 4 3
♥ A K 7 4	♥ 10 9 8	♥ 10 9 8	♥ J 9 2
♦ K Q 5	♦ 4	♦ 4	♦ 10 5 2
♣ 10 9 8	♣ 10 9 8	♣ 10 9 8	♣ 10 9 8

The bidding:
SOUTH: 1♣, 2♦, 3♥, 4♠, 5♠, 6♠, 7♠, 8♠, 9♠, 10♠, 11♠, 12♠, 13♠, 14♠, 15♠, 16♠, 17♠, 18♠, 19♠, 20♠, 21♠, 22♠, 23♠, 24♠, 25♠, 26♠, 27♠, 28♠, 29♠, 30♠, 31♠, 32♠, 33♠, 34♠, 35♠, 36♠, 37♠, 38♠, 39♠, 40♠, 41♠, 42♠, 43♠, 44♠, 45♠, 46♠, 47♠, 48♠, 49♠, 50♠, 51♠, 52♠, 53♠, 54♠, 55♠, 56♠, 57♠, 58♠, 59♠, 60♠, 61♠, 62♠, 63♠, 64♠, 65♠, 66♠, 67♠, 68♠, 69♠, 70♠, 71♠, 72♠, 73♠, 74♠, 75♠, 76♠, 77♠, 78♠, 79♠, 80♠, 81♠, 82♠, 83♠, 84♠, 85♠, 86♠, 87♠, 88♠, 89♠, 90♠, 91♠, 92♠, 93♠, 94♠, 95♠, 96♠, 97♠, 98♠, 99♠, 100♠.

Opening lead: Ten of ♠.

Declarer and the defenders look at a hand differently. If declarer needs to make a crucial play, it is usually best to postpone it as long as possible, to learn as much about the distribution as one can. When a defender can see a key decision looming, however, it is wiser to make it early before declarer discovers there is a problem.

The bidding was short and accurate. Once North could make a forcing jump raise in spades, South decided the value for a small slam.

Kanu to be operated within a month

MILAN (AFP) — Nwankwo Kanu, the Nigerian Olympic champion forced to quit football due to a heart complaint, is to undergo surgery next month.

Kanu, who has chosen a team of surgeons at Cleveland in the United States, went to the San Siro Stadium for the first time on Sunday to watch his team beat Parma 3-1.

The Nigerian, bought from Ajax Amsterdam over the summer, sat near club president Massimo Moratti and was cheered afterwards by Inter fans as he was leaving the ground.

The 20-year-old striker was found to have a weak aorta valve during a routine pre-season medical test. He won the 1995 European Cup with Ajax and the Olympic soccer gold medal with Nigeria before his condition was discovered.

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Sports

Jordan Times, Tuesday, October 29, 1996 11

Manchester United routed again as PSV keep scoring; Paris SG lose first match

LONDON (R) — English champions Manchester United, who conceded five goals at Newcastle last weekend, let in six at Southampton.

Their misery contrasted sharply with Dutch leaders PSV Eindhoven's fortunes. They took their week's goals tally to 15 with an 8-0 win over Roda JC Kerkrade.

A round-up of this weekend's major soccer league action in Europe:

England

Manchester United suffered another defensive nightmare, losing 6-3 at Southampton less than a week after being trounced 5-0 by title-rivals Newcastle.

Arsenal returned to the top of the Premier League when they crushed Leeds 3-0, spoiling Leeds Manager George Graham's highly-charged return to Highbury.

On an emotional afternoon in London Chelsea beat Tottenham 3-1 in their first match since 42-year-old vice-chairman Matthew Harding was killed in a helicopter crash.

Wreaths, and a pint of Guinness — Harding's favourite drink — were placed in the centre-circle before kickoff and a minute's silence was held by both sets of supporters.

Italy

Chile's Ivan Zamorano struck twice as Internazionale fought back from a goal down to defeat Parma 3-1 and join Juventus in a two-way tie at the top of the table.

Juve had to settle for a draw at Roma after second-half substitute Marco Delvecchio equalised for the home side deep into injury time at the Olympic Stadium.

Champions Milan dropped to fourth after going down to an 87th minute goal from Anselmo Robbiati at Fiorentina — their third defeat of the season under new coach Oscar Tabarez.

Both sides finished the match with 10 men. Milan's Stefano Eranio was sent off in the 45th minute and Fiorentina's Aldo Fuciano was dismissed in the 88th.



Steve McManaman (R) Liverpool tries to steer the ball around Derby goalkeeper Russell Hoult (L) during a Premiership match. Liverpool won the game 2-1 at Anfield, Liverpool (Reuters photo)

Germany

German first division leaders VfB Stuttgart and reigning champions Borussia Dortmund underlined their challenge for the title with five-goal romps against lowly opposition.

International striker Fredi Bobic hit a hat-trick for Stuttgart as they trounced Borussia Moenchengladbach 5-0, taking his personal tally to 10 goals in 12 games.

Brazilian defender Julio Cesar struck the first two goals for Dortmund in a 5-0 win over bottom club Arminia Bielefeld.

Bayern Munich kept up with the pacemakers by winning 2-0 at Fortuna Duesseldorf.

Spain

Barcelona stretched their lead at the top to four points thanks to an extraordinary hat-trick from Brazilian striker Ronaldo in the 3-2 victory over Valencia.

Second-placed Real Madrid slipped back after a disappointing goalless draw at home to Tenerife.

Struggling champions Atletico Madrid returned

to winning ways by beating Sporting Gijon 1-0 thanks to a fine goal by Roberto Fresnedoso.

France

Rennes striker Stephane Guivarch, on loan from champions Auxerre, struck twice to send Paris Saint-Germain crashing 2-1, their first league defeat of the season.

Monaco crushed Lille 4-1 away and Auxerre, who travel to Grasshopper Zurich in the European Champions' League on Wednesday, thrashed 10-man Lyon 7-0 at home to throw the French first division title race wide open.

Netherlands leaders PSV Eindhoven followed up last weekend's 7-2 destruction of Feyenoord with an 8-0 victory over Roda JC Kerkrade.

Ajax recorded their first away win of the campaign, coming from behind to beat Vitesse Arnhem 4-1. The defending champions go fourth.

Scotland

Paul Gascoigne delivered a personal message to England manager Glenn Hoddle with a stunning second-half hat-trick as Rangers beat Motherwell 5-0 to stay top.

Gascoigne's place in the England team is in doubt following personal problems and his less than inspiring display against Poland earlier this month. But he shone in the second half with goals after 66, 79 and 84 minutes.

Celtic stayed two points behind Rangers by winning 4-0 away to Hibernian.

Portugal

Porto climbed to the top of the table with a 5-0 away win at Espinho while previous leaders Benfica went down 1-0 at Sporting, who move into second place.

Holland

Ajax achieved their first away league victory of the season Sunday.

They hit Vitesse Arnhem with four second-half goals after trailing early on. Sixth-placed Vitesse were ahead after three minutes through Dejan Curovic, who beat Netherlands goalkeeper Edwin Van Der Sar with a free-kick from 20 metres.

They then dominated the rest of the half against an Ajax team missing wingers Tijani Babangida and Marc Overmars and defender Winston Bogarde because of injury.

Aikman leads Cowboys past Dolphins

MIAMI (R) — It was the most hotly-anticipated game of the season, and when it was over the Dallas Cowboys had played like Super Bowl champions against the coach who led them to the first two of their three titles of the 1990s.

Troy Aikman threw for 363 yards and three second-half touchdown passes and Dallas bottled up Miami's offense after halftime as the Cowboys handed Jimmy Johnson's Dolphins a resounding 29-10 defeat.

Cowboys owner Jerry Jones fired Johnson in 1994 over a clash of gigantic egos after he led the team to consecutive Super Bowl wins. Johnson returned to coaching this season.

Star quarterback Dan Marino returned to the Miami lineup but could not prevent his team from losing for the fourth time in their last five games to fall to 4-4.

At Arizona, Adrian Murrell rushed for a 199 yards and a touchdown as the New York Jets finally won a game, beating the Cardinals 31-21.

In Atlanta, Norm Johnson kicked a 20-yard field goal with three seconds remaining to lift the Pittsburgh Steelers (6-2) to a 20-17 victory that dropped the woeful Falcons to 0-8.

In Washington, Terry Allen rushed for 124 yards and three touchdowns to lead the surprising Redskins to their seventh win in row, a 31-16 victory over the Indianapolis Colts.

FIFA suggest matches prior to the Sydney Games

SYDNEY (AFP) — FIFA, world football's governing body, has suggested that four Olympic matches be played before the official opening of the Sydney 2000 Olympics, a report said on Monday, but organizers were quick to reject the idea.

The suggestion, made because of concerns for the players' health, could stretch the Games over almost three weeks.

In an interview in the upcoming issue of world soccer magazine, FIFA General Secretary Sepp Blatter said one major problem at the Atlanta Olympics was the match schedule crushing the first-round groups into one week.

"Clearly, this is too much for both the health of the athletes and the quality of football," he said.

"It makes more sense — as they did in Spain — for the football tournament to start several days before the formal opening of the Games," he said.

He suggested matches several days in advance of the Friday, September 15, opening of the 2000 Games.

At the Barcelona Olympics, four matches were played as a FIFA experiment, the day before the opening ceremony.

Expanding the Sydney Olympics by several days could mean added costs for communications, transport and security for the organising committee, SOCOG.

A SOCOG spokesman said FIFA had not officially approached the committee about any proposed changes.

"We have not heard from them on this matter," he said.

But he said such a move went against current Olympic thinking.

"Both SOCOG and the IOC are not in favour of any events being staged before the opening ceremony," the spokesman said.

Baseball officials worried about game's future

NEW YORK (AFP) — Even as the New York Yankees were dethroning Atlanta to win the World Series, acting Major League Baseball Commissioner Bud Selig was sending danger signals about the sport's future.

The sport has been without a labour deal since December of 1993.

It took a federal court order to end a 232-day shutdown that wiped out the 1994 World Series. Now the bickering is beginning again.

Union leader Don Fehr and management negotiator Randy Levine have worked out terms of a five-year deal that features salary caps in most years and first-ever regular season games between American and National League clubs.

"The deal is reached," Fehr said. "Bud just has to decide if he backs it. If he doesn't, he doesn't. There's nothing I can do."

Fehr's phrases sent Selig into the press box minutes before the biggest night in baseball to say the agreement sought by fans everywhere was not yet a done deal, the worst news possible at the worst moment possible.

"As far as I'm concerned, it's still in the negotiation stages," said Selig, owner of the Milwaukee Brewers. "Negotiations are ongoing. I have purposely tried to stay away from them."

Players have given Fehr and their leadership the power to approve the basic deal as made. Selig has refused to call an owners' meeting to discuss the matter, which must be approved by 21 of 28 owners to be adopted.

What worries many is hard-line owners such as Chicago White Sox boss

Jerry Reinsdorf, who have helped keep the matter from being settled.

They favor trying to overturn the court ruling that forbids owners from imposing new work rules with tighter salary caps on players. They would make potentially more money with their plan, but odds of success are slim.

If they even get the chance to try, it means throwing out all the work Levine and Fehr have done. And if they succeed, Fehr has vowed players would return to the walk-out and appeal to a higher court.

The feud has sliced a once-billion-dollar business in half, and the 20 per cent dip in attendance in 1995 rebounded only six per cent this year. New ballparks are being built with fewer seats to reflect diminished interest.

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2) Regalo di Natale (Christmas Present)	23/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Pupi Avati	24/10	5:00 p.m.
3) Romanzo di un giovane povero (The Story of a Poor Young Man)	24/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Ettore Scola	25/10	5:00 p.m.
4) Una storia semplice (A Simple Story)	26/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Emidio Greco	27/10	5:00 p.m.
5) Per grazia ricevuta (For Favours Received)	27/10	8:00 p.m.
Director: Nino Manfredi	28/10	5:00 p.m.
6) Nemici d'infanzia (Childhood Enemies)	28/10	8:00 p.m.
	29/10	5:00 p.m.

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Government rejects human rights allegations as political statement

Muasher concedes 'some violations' but asserts Jordan's achievements place it at par with Europe

ICRC confirms 'unrestricted access' to all detention facilities

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The government on Monday formally rejected allegations of torture in detention and restrictions on public freedoms levelled against it by the Arab Human Rights Organisation (AOHR) and said most of the contents of a recent AOHR report appeared to be "political statements rather than specific facts that support the charges."

Minister of Information Marwan Muasher also pointed out that anyone who claims to have suffered torture in detention had the option of filing a case in a court of law under the Constitution and asked why those making the charges had not exercised this option.

He was replying to a question on statements given by four alleged victims of torture who were produced by the AOHR at a press conference two weeks ago.

Dr. Muasher conceded that there had been "certain violations," but that Jordan had achieved significant progress in respect for human rights that the Kingdom could be compared with European countries rather than Middle Eastern countries.

The minister described the AOHR report as a political statement rather than an accurate picture of the human rights situation in the Kingdom.

He said the Jordanian government gave proper attention to presentations

made by local, regional and international human rights organisations.

Organisations like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) also have access to "all detention facilities, including that of the General Intelligence Department," Dr. Muasher said.

Jacques de Maio, chief delegate of the ICRC in Amman, confirmed that the organisation had "unlimited access to all detention facilities in the territory of Jordan" under an "ongoing programme" with the cooperation of the government.

"The programme is going very well," he told the Jordan Times, but declined further comment in line with the all-Swiss organisation's policy throughout the world.

"It is not our mandate to disclose to the public our assessment of treatment of detainees or conditions of detention," said Mr. De Maio. "We share our assessment with the relevant authorities in full confidentiality," he said.

Such confidentiality, he added, is not limited to Jordan or any other country but a universal policy adopted by the ICRC.

In his comments on Monday, Dr. Muasher focused more on an AOHR assertion in a broader sense that the present government had the worst record of human rights since the democratisation process began in 1989.

According to a statement issued by the Jordan chapter of the Cairo-based organi-

sation, 1996 "witnessed the formation of a new government that promised to respect human rights, but there has been a deterioration... that brought back the situation reminiscent of the days of martial law."

The group particularly referred to what it described as "tough restrictions on freedoms of expression and press."

Dr. Muasher dismissed the AOHR's assertion, which, he said, was not supported by specifics. In fact, he said, the record of the government of Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti, which took office in February this year, "spoke for itself."

"The job of the government is to respect and implement the laws that are in force and the AOHR seems to be addressing the laws, which were not enacted by this government anyway," said Dr. Muasher.

The minister said that only 13 cases related to "clear" violations of the Press and Publications Law were sent to court by the Department of Press and Publications of the Ministry of Information this year.

"The numbers of similar cases in 1993 (when the law was enacted), 1994 and 1995, were much higher than 13," said Dr. Muasher in an implicit rejection of the AOHR charge that the Kabariti government's record on public freedoms was "worse" than that of its predecessors.

The information minister also pointed out that the AOHR report contained

specific references to the Press and Publications Law as well as procedures related to filing charges in court and the scope of the law and procedures in terms of actions that the government was free to adopt.

"The report is tackling the law and regulations as a whole" and notes the leeway the law gives to the executive authority and does not accuse the government of violating the legislation or regulations, he said.

"The government is implementing the law, which was enacted after going through the due constitutional process that includes the approval of Parliament, the elected representative of the people," stated Dr. Muasher.

Therefore, he added, the AOHR charges "are more of political statements and opinions" about the laws in force in the Kingdom rather than specific charges against the government itself.

In general, said Dr. Muasher, the respect for human rights and public freedoms in Jordan "stood out" when compared with the record of any other country in the region.

"But that does not mean that we are limiting ourselves to that level," he added. "Jordan could be easily compared with European models in terms of respect for human rights and public freedoms," he stressed.

Peace Corps volunteers to arrive in Jordan in April

Jordan and U.S. organisation sign agreement

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Jordan and the U.S. Peace Corps on Monday signed an agreement under which the Kingdom joins 91 other countries which host 7,000 American volunteers which help their development efforts in various sectors.

Under the accord, signed by Minister of Social Development Hamdan Abu Jammous and signed by Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan, the American organisation would send 25 volunteers to the Kingdom beginning in April.

While the definite sphere where the volunteers will work remained to be identified, Mr. Gearan told a press briefing, the initial focus is expected to be community development, particularly in outlying areas, and in setting up national parks.

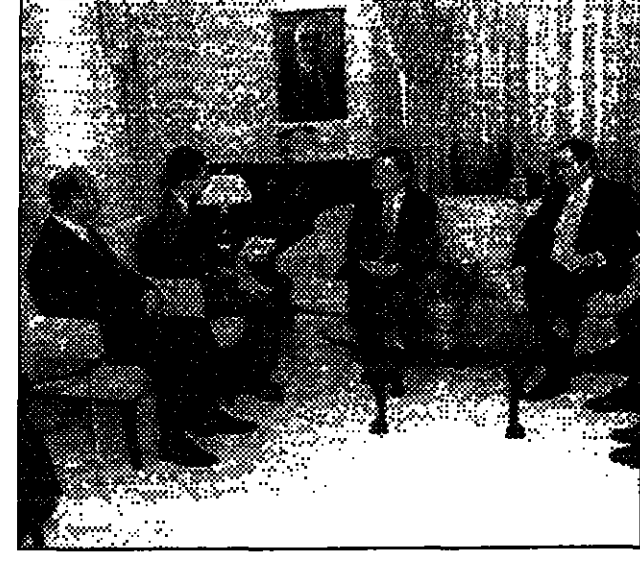
Other areas of proven Peace Corps expertise include agriculture, education, the environment and health as well as small business development.

Peace Corps volunteers, all of them U.S. citizens, have contributed to development efforts in 133 countries and currently maintain presence in 91 countries, Mr. Gearan said.

Mr. Gearan, who was received by Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Monday, described the agreement between Peace Corps and Jordan as "an important statement... reflecting the strong relationship between" the U.S. and the Kingdom.

Mr. Gearan emphasised that the spheres where Peace Corps volunteers will work in Jordan "will be identified locally" by the Jordanian government. "It is not a decision taken in Washington," he stressed.

The volunteers will undergo an intense three-month course in learning Arabic



Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Monday confers with Peace Corps Director Mark Gearan (third from left) in a meeting attended by Minister of Social Development Hamdan Abu Jammous (left), U.S. Ambassador Wesley Egan (fourth from left) and other officials (Petra photo)

language before actually beginning work in Jordan and stay here for a period of two years.

A second batch of 25 volunteers will be sent in 1998 so that in 18 months' time their number will be 50, he said.

One of the prime conditions of assigning volunteers was the right atmosphere to ensure the safety and security of the volunteers, he added, in what was an implicit recognition that the Peace Corps, a U.S. federal agency, accepts Jordan as a stable and secure country.

Mr. Gearan said the Peace Corps, which has a 35-year record of helping countries at the grass-roots level, seeks to promote friendship and greater understanding as well as "cross-cultural awareness" between the U.S. and the countries involved.

He noted that numerous American politicians, bureaucrats, diplomats and businessmen as well as professionals have been, at one point or another, served as Peace Corps volunteers.

Discussions on the Jordan Peace Corps agreement began 18 months ago, and the Kingdom is the first country in the immediate Middle East to host volunteers from the organisation. At present the Peace Corps have presence in Morocco and Tunisia; it has worked in Yemen also.

Mr. Gearan emphasised the Peace Corps "do not bring in aid package as such."

"Our assistance is the volunteers and their services," he said.

The Peace Corps will pay for the travel of the volunteers and pay them stipends for their subsistence in the host country.

Mr. Gearan, who visited social development projects and environmental projects in Sahab, Naour and Iraq Al Amir being run by the Ministry of Social Development, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation and the Queen Alia Welfare Fund, said Mr. Kabariti expressed keen interest in cooperation between the Peace Corps and Jordan.



Brazil writer goes home after heart surgery

BRASILIA (R) — Brazil's foremost living writer, Jorge Amado, left a hospital in the northeastern city of Salvador Sunday, 10 days after undergoing heart surgery, local television said. Mr. Amado, 84, said he was feeling well after an operation to clear a blocked artery but did not know when he would resume writing his latest book, *Globo network* reported. Mr. Amado, who has written some 32 books over 65 years, suffered a heart attack three years ago and was taken to hospitals at least three times this year in Salvador and in Paris, his second home. Amado is a household name in Brazil and has made his mark abroad. His novels, playing on the tropical sensuality, violence and feudal politics of his impoverished home state of Bahia, have been translated into nearly 50 languages and have sold more than 20 million copies worldwide. Several, such as *Dona Flor And Her Two Husbands* and *Gabriel*, have been turned into films or soap operas.

China finds fossilised forest under Gobi Desert

BEIJING (AFP) — Chinese geologists have found a 3.8-square kilometre fossilised forest under the Gobi Desert, Xinhua reported Monday. The 150-million-year-old forest, comprising ginkgo and birch trees and other primeval plants, was discovered after heavy wind erosion in the Gobi Desert revealed a section of the giant fossil. Although palaeontologists have already uncovered evidence that the inhospitable Gobi — which runs from northwest China's Xinjiang region into Central Asia — was once a fertile basin, the fossilised forest is the largest piece of proof yet.

Beijing sets Rat-Killing Day

BEIJING (R) — China's capital, which launched a fly-swating drive in a failed bid to host the 2000 Olympics, has turned its wrath on rodents, declaring Nov. 12 as "Rat-Killing Day." Thousands of "rodent warriors" will fan out across the city, setting traps and laying poison to help rid the city of the pests. "Nov. 12... Is Beijing's official Rat-Killing Day," the official Xinhua News Agency announced Monday. Warehouses, market places and construction sites will be the key targets. Beijing tried to wipe out flies in 1993 in a clean-up ahead of an International Olympic Committee decision on which city would host the 2000 Olympics. Earlier this year, residents of the northeastern city of Shenyang eliminated 400,000 rats in a campaign. Shenyang officials offered a bounty of one yuan (\$0.12) for each dead rat turned over to local health authorities. Xinhua did not say whether Beijing would pay its residents to help rid the city of the pests. Under the Chinese lunar calendar, 1996 is the year of the rat.

Bogota launches war on bullfrog

BOGOTA (R) — The Colombian government has unveiled plans costing thousands of dollars to confront a new enemy from within — the bullfrog. Since it was illegally brought into the country in 1986, the large amphibian has spread widely and is beginning to destabilise the natural order in some areas because of its voracious appetite for smaller amphibians and insects, according to the Environment Ministry. In a bulletin issued over the weekend, the ministry said it was donating about \$79,000, mainly to the country's coffee growing regions, to eradicate the frog-turned-pest. The project will initially pinpoint the areas where the bullfrog lives and its rate of reproduction before moving to wipe it out.

15 dead, over 70 missing in Cairo apartment collapse

CAIRO (Agencies) — Rescuers used bulldozers, dogs and their bare hands to search on Monday through the rubble of a 12-storey apartment building which collapsed here, killing at least 15 people and leaving more than 70 missing.

Police said 13 bodies had been removed from the debris nearly 24 hours after the building came tumbling down Sunday evening while a woman and a man pulled out alive died later in hospital of their injuries.

Among the dead were a Jordanian businessman Wassim Al Adnani, 45, and his son Mohammad Al Adnani, a 20-year-old student, police said.

Mr. Adnani's wife, Wijdan Abdul Hamid Mullah, 40, was in serious condition after being dug out of the debris, hospital officials said.

Police had said earlier Monday that Mullah had

died of her injuries.

The 11-storey apartment building is two blocs from the home of Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Twenty survivors had been pulled out, said police and rescue workers who stopped using bulldozers and heavy machinery for fear of further jeopardising any remaining survivors.

Rescuers working through the night blasted a hole in front of the building, and by dawn had removed a man whom they had heard earlier crying for help.

"I'm Mustafa. I'm Mustafa. I've got three others here with me," the man, who was wedged beneath a wall, had said.

An emergency medical team amputated the man's legs after unsuccessfully trying to lift the wall with cranes.

He was taken to hospital and rescuers were trying to pull out others they thought were still alive, Dr. Ahmad

Abu Zeid told reporters.

Earlier, rescuers managed to pull from the top of the rubble mountain a woman survivor trapped beneath a ceiling. They also pulled out the body of a man who lay beneath her.

Rescuers had previously recovered three bodies. Doctors said an elderly woman who suffocated to death was among those removed. Another body was recovered about noon on Monday.

Ambulances and a heavy crane were parked at the base of the apartment block, transformed into a surreal burial ground of personal effects like record albums, refrigerators and handbags.

Only a corner of the 25-year-old building remained standing. A heap of concrete chunks and steel reinforcement rods was all that remained of the rest of the building, which collapsed like the folds of an accordion.

Arafat in Oslo

OSLO (AFP) — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat is hoping for a breakthrough in the deadlocked peace talks with Israel, he said upon arriving in Oslo for a two-day visit.

"We are doing our best" to resolve the deadlock, Mr. Arafat told the press, adding that he had come "to get a little help from my Norwegian friends."

Mr. Arafat was greeted by Foreign Minister Bjørn Tore Godal at Fornebu airport.

The Norwegian capital is the first stop on a four-day European tour by Mr. Arafat, and is his first visit to Oslo since he was elected president of the self-rule areas of Gaza and the West Bank in January.

The Palestinian leader will hold talks with Norway's new prime minister, Thorbjørn Jagland, who was appointed the head of government on Friday following the surprise resignation of Gro Harlem Brundtland.

On Tuesday Mr. Arafat will leave Oslo for Ireland, which holds the European Union rotating presidency, and Spain.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International's Norwegian branch urged Oslo to put pressure on Mr. Arafat to end the use of torture in the Palestinian territories.

"President Arafat must leave Norway with the clear understanding that there are limits to what the Norwegian authorities are willing to tolerate, and that it will have consequences for cooperation and donor efforts," said Amnesty Norway General Secretary Jan Borgen.

Norway is president of the ad hoc committee of donor countries to the Palestinian territories.

According to Amnesty, torture is used extensively in the Palestinian areas.

Goebbels' step-granddaughter married to a Jew, report reveals

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The granddaughter of Magda Goebbels, wife of the Nazi Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels, has converted to Judaism and married a German Jew, it was revealed Monday.

Mrs. K.R., a young woman in her thirties, is Magda Goebbels' granddaughter by her first marriage, the Israeli daily newspaper Yediot Aharonot stated.

Magda later married Goebbels, who orchestrated anti-Semitic propaganda in Nazi Germany.

Until now, the small Jewish community in Germany has kept Mrs. K.R.'s secret, the paper said.

Mrs. K.R. was converted to Judaism some years ago by an orthodox rabbi. Not

long after, she fell in love and married a German Jew, whose parents survived the Holocaust. The couple and their children now live in a large German city, Yediot said.

Mrs. K.R. is also a regular visitor to Israel, where some of her husband's family lives. According to an unnamed leading representative of the German Jewish community cited by the newspaper, she has made large donations to the Jewish state.

"She is a great supporter of Israel. We don't mention her past in the Jewish community. She is a young woman who has nothing to do with the atrocities committed by her grandmother's husband," the representative said.

Goebbels was appointed minister of propaganda by Adolf Hitler in 1933. He was responsible for the deportation of Berlin's Jewish community to the extermination camps, and called for "total war" against the allies in 1943.

Goebbels, Magda and their six children committed suicide on May 1, 1945, the day after Hitler, during the final days before the fall of Nazi Germany.

According to Ephraim Zuroff, the president of the Israeli branch of the Simon Wiesenthal centre, an association which looks after survivors of the Holocaust, "it is our sweetest revenge on the Nazis. It's a pity Goebbels can't see it, it would make him turn in his grave."